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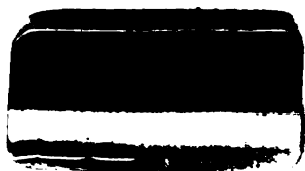
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# **FREEDOM AND AUTHORITY IN RELIGION**

BY

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TO  
**My Students**  
OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND  
FUTURE, THIS BOOK IS  
AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED





## PREFACE

It is scarcely open to question that there is a need for a clear exposition of the problem of authority in religion. Two chief considerations have led the writer to prepare this volume: First, the disquietude and mental unrest of many ministers of the gospel and thoughtful Christians, as they have noted the modern attempt to eradicate the whole conception of authority from Christianity, resulting in many instances in a paralysis of faith or an uncertainty which destroys the power of the gospel message; and secondly, the one-sidedness or inadequacy of many books on authority in religion written from the scientific or philosophic standpoint. A book written under the influence of these motives obviously should possess certain corresponding qualities. For one thing, it should be within the grasp of the average educated minister who is in earnest in his desire to understand one of the most vital themes of modern times. At the same time it should discuss with a sufficient degree of thoroughness the scientific and philosophic aspects of the subject. The problem of authority in religion involves directly or indirectly all the deeper problems of science and philosophy. A book on freedom and authority

in religion, therefore, necessarily becomes a sharer in some measure in the current controversy on these subjects. This work, however, is not primarily controversial, but rather constructive, although in the earlier and critical chapters a number of controverted points are discussed.

The argument which we offer in these pages recognizes fully the value of the distinctive scientific criterion of explanation as employed hitherto, but it denies with emphasis its adequacy for the religious life. Nor does the argument depend for its cogency upon the outcome of pending discussions as to the existence in the biological world of a principle of creative evolution as urged by Professor Bergson, or upon something else over and above mechanism and chemical agencies which may lead to the discovery of a second criterion of scientific explanation. The bases of religious knowledge lie in personality and personal relationships. This we undertake to show. Along with this we have sought to indicate incidentally to what extent the current effort to make religion and theology scientific has been misleading. Until the conception of science obtains a wider meaning such an effort either leads too far or it does not lead far enough; too far in that, if the scientific criterion of physical continuity is consistently and thoroughly applied everywhere, God and religion vanish; or not far enough, in that, if deductions from the plane of nature to a sphere above nature be the sum total of the outcome,

religion never becomes knowledge, but only philosophic speculation. The religious life, indeed, sustains very interesting relations to empirical science and speculative philosophy. A part of our task is to make these relations clear. Hence the chapter in review of current philosophic theories, and that on the nature of religion.

Numerous works have appeared in recent years on the subject of authority in religion. A number of these are referred to in the pages which follow. Much of current opinion among those who have written has been away from the idea of authority in religion altogether. In addition to the works reviewed in our first chapter we may name two very suggestive volumes by Mr. Oman, one entitled "Faith and Freedom," the other, "Vision and Authority," and also Professor Sterrett's volume, "The Freedom of Authority." Mr. Oman has given admirable expression to the spiritual meaning of the principles of freedom, and Professor Sterrett has reviewed with effectiveness some recent works which deal with questions bearing directly on the problem of authority. Doctor Forsythe's volume, "Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind," abounds in suggestive insights as to spiritual freedom and is a fine tonic for a faltering pulpit. It has not seemed necessary to consider formally Professor Briggs' volume of several years ago on "The Bible, the Church, and the Reason." The place of each of these factors in the problem of authority

becomes apparent in the course of our discussion. Nor have we felt that it was needful to trace the history of J. H. Newman's quest for religious authority and his union finally with the Roman Catholic Church. The principle we advocate is radically at variance with Newman's view, and if it is correct, the Roman Catholic authority is at once seen to be an illegitimate form of religious authority. For in none of the existing works has the specific problem of this book been dealt with, viz., to indicate the origin of authority, its permanent necessity and value in religion as elsewhere; its peculiar characteristics in religion which distinguish it from other forms of authority; and, further, to point out the relations sustained by the principle of authority in religion to our scientific and philosophic culture; to show how the principles of freedom and authority are implicated the one in the other, each being necessary to the realization of the other, and finally to indicate how in the Christian religion the ideals of freedom and authority meet and are reconciled by a harmonious blending into the higher unity of the spiritual life. It will thus appear that the view of Schleiermacher and his successors, which has gained wide currency, is inadequate for the religious life of man, although it sprang from a high motive and sought to revitalize a decadent Christianity. We retain its truth, but show its relation to a supplementary truth of vital importance. The books which we examine in our first chapter were writ-

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ten by men whose general positions are in harmony with those of Schleiermacher. These are selected for careful consideration rather than Schleiermacher himself, since they represent later phases of the subjective ideal of authority. We seek first to show the inadequacy of subjectivism and then we proceed to lay the foundation for the general doctrine of religious authority.

LOUISVILLE, September 1, 1912.

E. Y. M.



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# FREEDOM AND AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

## CHAPTER I

### THE MODERN IDEAL OF FREEDOM

#### I. THE CASE STATED

Our age beyond all others is the age of freedom. Freedom is the winged word which, since the Reformation, has led to human progress in all realms of endeavor. The revolt has been complete against all kinds of tyranny, and one might almost say against all forms of authority. The separation of Church and State has been, in the West at least, triumphantly achieved. A free Church in a free State is at once a political and religious axiom in America. Democracy in the State has in very great measure been achieved, although we are yet struggling with many problems. Freedom of belief in religion, of research in science, of opportunity and effort in the industrial world, absolute freedom in all spheres is the ideal.

The philosophic implications of this ideal of freedom are manifold. A pronounced individualism is, of course, an organic idea in all forms of the struggle for freedom. The individualism arises in one instance from the sense of the worth of man as man, the priceless and eternal value of the soul as taught by Jesus. In another it grows out of the sense of a man's direct relation to God and responsibility to him. This is a fruitful source of all the higher individualism of the age, and it is closely related to the teachings of Christianity as to the worth of the soul. Again, the moral autonomy of the individual as emphasized in the philosophy of Kant has been a potent influence in the development of the modern ideal of freedom.

Once more individualism may rest upon a pantheistic basis. Man is conceived as the organ of the infinite, and every man becomes authoritative to himself in proportion as he correctly expresses the infinite. Or the philosophy here shades off into personal idealism, and to the individual is attributed eternal worth as a part of the Absolute, and life is conceived as the task of achieving the eternal harmony with the Absolute, a canceling of the finite in the infinite. Or again, individualism takes its rise out of a philosophy like that of Nietzsche, which is, in essence, monistic and materialistic evolutionism. The Superman of Nietzsche is the result of the struggle for life on the animal plane projected upward into the human realm. It is indi-

vidualistic animalism. We might continue the enumeration, but it is needless to do so. All philosophic roads naturally lead to individualism or are made to do so.

No one to-day will question the beneficence of the modern movement toward individualism and freedom. It has been of infinite value to mankind in the West and will slowly leaven the East.

We are beginning to see, however, that the ideal of freedom needs qualifying at certain points. There exist political and religious and philosophic ideals, which are the direct fruit of the freedom of the human spirit, which in tendency are subversive of all the values of civilization. The remedy would seem to be not a return to absolutism in the State nor the infallibility characteristic of the Roman hierarchy in religion, nor to ecclesiastical or political censorship of human thought in any sphere. There is need rather that we revise our conceptions of freedom and authority, and endeavor to define both in terms which will secure the needed freedom combined with the restraint necessary to human welfare. There is need, in short, for a synthesis of the conception of freedom and authority without excluding any of the elements of value in the former and without including any of the tyrannies which have, during the ages, been assembled under the ægis of the latter. The solution will be found ultimately in the fact that there is an individual, and that over against him there is

a world, and that there is interaction between man and the world. These are the only assumptions needed if we view the question generally and abstractly. Of course there are numerous steps in the development of the argument which will be necessary before the view here presented is made clear, but broadly speaking and in most general terms man's freedom can only be achieved, and the true authority for human life can only be recognized by him when he wisely and properly seeks to adjust himself to the universe, regarded as physical, social, political, moral, or religious.

We have, however, deliberately limited ourselves in this work to the problem of freedom and authority in the religious and Christian sphere. Here we find the most fundamental relations of man to the universe. The solution of the problem of freedom and authority in religion will contribute greatly to its solution in other spheres. What are the conceptions of freedom and authority in the Christian religion? Professor Sabatier, in his brilliant work, "The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit," denies that the principle of authority in any legitimate sense has place in Christianity at all. He is one of a large and growing school of thinkers who exclude from their views of religion all external authority of whatsoever kind.

We may profitably review the present situation by considering the two contrasted types of opinion which are now opposing each other with reference

to authority in religion. One type is the Roman Catholic, which need not detain us long. It is too familiar to require extended comment. The Roman Catholic conception of authority as held to-day is the result of a long process of development through the centuries. It followed a logical principle which was immanent in it at all stages. In the Middle Ages the general council was regarded as the supreme authority. The Gallican school lodged authority in the necessary agreement of pope and council at a later date. Finally in the Vatican Council of 1870 the Ultramontane school triumphed and the dogma of the infallibility of the pope was promulgated. Our purpose does not require that we trace this development in detail. The characteristics of this authority of the Roman Catholic Church are well understood. It is external. It has its seat primarily not in an inspired book, but in the head of the Church. The Church is the only authoritative interpreter of the book. The individual takes what is given in doctrine and in practice without question. His faith is implicit. He accepts all that the Church teaches simply because the Church teaches it. This reason for accepting doctrines beyond his comprehension is not a reason based on an intelligent comprehension of the needs of the religious life arrived at by intellectual and spiritual processes of his own, which seem to justify such acceptance. He accepts them because he has renounced the task of determining for himself in

any sense what is best for him in religion. He renounces the privilege of interpreting the Scriptures for himself because he regards himself and the Church regards him as incompetent to do so with safety. In a word, his individualism finds no recognition. It is canceled. Individualism as a principle is regarded as the fruitful source of every kind of evil. Thus the principle of authority becomes absolute in the Roman Catholic Church.

## 2. THE REPUDIATION OF AUTHORITY AND THE SUBJECTIVE CRITERION

Over against Roman Catholic authority and in sharpest antithesis to it is the modern principle of freedom. The advocates of this principle in Germany and France, in England and America, are far too numerous to mention. They are idealists of the most pronounced type in their view of freedom in the religious sphere. They emphasize the likeness rather than the unlikeness of man to God; the immanence rather than the transcendence of God; man's unaided and native capacity rather than his incapacity in religion; the pedagogic rather than the redemptive aspects of salvation; and the Christian consciousness rather than the Bible or the church as the ultimate seat of authority in religion. Historically, this type of opinion came first to its most distinctive expression in Clement of Alexandria and others of the Greek school in the early centuries. It was restored by Schleiermacher at the beginning of

the last century after a long period of eclipse. Since Schleiermacher it has been a leavening influence in theology in all Protestant countries. Ritschl and his school in Germany have given it wide currency in a modified form. In France it has recently assumed a form known as Symbolo-Fideism, according to which faith is the inner vital principle, and doctrine the symbolic husk which contains it.

Two modern tendencies have contributed powerfully to the formation and perpetuation of this type of opinion. One of these is the religious—the desire to restore vitality to theology and save it from externalism and formalism. The other is the scientific spirit. The scientific method and ideal have given direction to the movement at every stage. It has been assumed in fact that only such truth as can be scientifically mediated is worthy of belief in religion. The scientific standard has been applied to the doctrinal system at every point. A part of our task will be to examine this assumption. Meantime it is mentioned as an essential factor in the movement we are considering.

The field is so vast that the material for our exposition can be found almost anywhere in current theological literature. We shall make use, however, of a few writers who have directly or indirectly treated the subject of authority in religion. Among these Martineau and Sabatier are the most conspicuous examples. Professor Lobstein, in his "Introduction to Protestant Dogmatics" affords



much valuable material. We proceed to note the marks of the modern view which so sharply opposes the Roman Catholic.

First of all, the seat of authority in religion is within and not without the human spirit. Sabatier says: "It is the property of the method of authority to base all judgment of doctrine upon the exterior marks of its origin and the trustworthiness of those who promulgated it. In religion this method appeals to miracles, which accredit God's messengers to men, and stamp their words or writings with the divine imprint. On the other hand, the modern experimental method puts us in immediate contact with reality, and teaches us to judge of a doctrine only according to its intrinsic value, directly manifested to the mind in the degree of its evidence. The two methods are so radically opposed that to accept the latter is at once to mark the former as insufficient and outworn."<sup>1</sup> Of course the sum of the matter is that all external authority in religion is repudiated. The principle of authority has no place in religion, and the distinguishing mark of authority is its externality. This last point needs to be carefully noted, as it is a primary consideration throughout the reasoning of Sabatier and the others.

This leads to the next point, namely, that religious truth is worthy of acceptance only in the degree of its intrinsic evidence. In so far as it commends

<sup>1</sup> "Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit," p. 15.

itself to the reason and spiritual nature of man it is trustworthy. Beyond this point it has no claim upon our credence. This reason or spiritual nature, however, is the Christian reason and spiritual nature. It is the Christian consciousness to which appeal is made and not to the ordinary unchristian consciousness. Whatever commends itself to the renewed consciousness of the believing followers of Christ the morally and spiritually illuminated soul is for that soul worthy of acceptance.

At this point we are led a step farther backward to the gospel as the law of the Christian consciousness. Says Sabatier: "Jesus never appears to act by constraint; he is always inspired. His religion was essentially the religion of the Spirit, and remains forever its source and perfect type. . . The gospel properly becomes the law of human consciousness and is forever inseparable from it. . . The religion of the Spirit is the adequate and natural form of the gospel, and the gospel is the content, the very substance of the religion of the Spirit. They form an organic unity, which is destroyed when they are separated and set one over against the other."<sup>2</sup> We shall see later what Sabatier means by the gospel. Meantime it is to be noted that he imposes to this extent a norm or standard upon the Christian consciousness. This standard, however, must be spiritually applied to the Christian consciousness. It is binding and effective because the

<sup>2</sup> "Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit," p. 323.

consciousness of the Christian responds to it, recognizes its truth and value. Here it is claimed that Sabatier and the Reformers are at one. Luther and Calvin and the rest appealed primarily, it is asserted, to the inner witness of the Spirit, and later Protestantism lapsed from this high position to external authority of the creeds and the Scriptures. The modern subjective principle is declared to be simply a restoration of the Reformation principle.

The advocates of the subjective principle do not deny that the mind is subject to law. Sabatier says: "To say that the mind is autonomous is not to hold that it is not subject to law; it is to say that it finds the supreme norm of its ideas and acts not outside of itself, but within itself, in its very constitution."<sup>3</sup> Again he says: "What is the education of mankind if not the passage from faith in authority to personal conviction, and to the sustained practice of the intellectual duty to consent to no idea except by virtue of its recognized truth, to accept no fact until its reality has been, in one way or another, established."<sup>4</sup>

In this last quotation we have the modern scientific ideal clearly and sharply stated. The language of Sabatier is almost identical with that of Professor Huxley in his "Discourse on Method," where he lays down as "the great first commandment of science" the following:

<sup>3</sup> "Religions of Authority," etc., p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

"There is a path that leads to truth so surely that any one who will follow it must needs reach the goal, whether his capacity is great or small. And there is one guiding rule by which a man may always find this path, and keep himself from straying when he has found it. This golden rule is—give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted."<sup>5</sup>

That the theological method of Sabatier is identical with that of Huxley and physical science, it is perfectly clear, since the theologian asserts our obligation "to the sustained practice of the intellectual duty to consent to no idea except by virtue of its recognized truth," while the scientific man forbids us to accept any propositions except "those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted." There will be need to comment at some length upon this identification of the methods of theology and physical science in later pages. We shall raise the question whether the generic differences between science and theology do not forbid such identification, and whether it does not constitute one of the most far-reaching fallacies of Sabatier and his school. Surely the scientific spirit in dealing with the facts of the inner life of man as well as the facts of external nature is wholly admirable. But we may well give heed to the question whether in the nature of the case the

<sup>5</sup> "Lay Sermons," p. 322.

two spheres do not present differences so radical as to forbid the thorough-going application of the same method at all points.

To grasp Sabatier's position truly we need to consider other features of it implied in the foregoing. He exalts Jesus as the sovereign religious leader of men. The gospel which he advocates came from Christ. It is his gospel. "In the last analysis and to go down to the very root of the Christian religion, to be a Christian is not to acquire a notion of God, or even an abstract doctrine of his potential love; it is to live over within ourselves the inner spiritual life of Christ, and by the union of our heart with his to *feel* in ourselves the presence of a Father and the reality of our filial relation to him, just as Christ felt in himself the Father's presence and his filial relation to him."<sup>6</sup>

At every point, however, Sabatier safeguards his fundamental subjective criterion of truth and credibility. While clinging to a gospel, and to Jesus as its author, he nevertheless affirms that there is nothing in the gospel which the soul may not verify for itself.

"There is nothing in the gospel which your conscience may not recognize as the highest good to which secretly it aspires; nothing which, if you sincerely desire it, you cannot yourself experience, and thus recognize it as the very soul of your soul."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "Religions of Authority," etc., pp. 293, 294.      <sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 328.

We note in the next place Sabatier's analysis of the Christian consciousness. It is necessary to condense his statements lest these quotations be extended too greatly. The Christian consciousness, according to Sabatier, is constituted by the vital antithesis of the Christian's sense of fatal separation from God, and the sense of blessed reconciliation with him "the reciprocal passage from the one to the other is the constant activity, the very life of the Christian consciousness." The passage from the sense of sin to the sense of reconciliation is made by repentance, which renounces the sinful past, and faith, which is trust in God alone and which becomes the hope of eternal life. This is the passage from darkness to light, and is the true moral resurrection wrought in us by the consciousness of Christ, which becoming ours produces in us this change.

The sense of sin and of reconciliation which follows it does not take place once for all in conversion. They are the poles of experience between which the Christian constantly oscillates. Regeneration is the conquest in us by the divine Spirit of the evil principle of our nature. The Christian consciousness is in the last analysis simply the moral consciousness, so that we remain one with the common humanity about us in our Christian consciousness. The latter is simply a broadening and deepening of the moral consciousness under the stimulus of the gospel.

In addition to the moral antithesis of Christian experience as outlined above, there is also a metaphysical one, our sense of the contradiction between the finite and the infinite, the ephemeral and the eternal, the weak creature and the universal being. This contradiction, however, is morally overcome in our sense of reconciliation with God and the revelation of his infinite love.<sup>8</sup>

The above is a condensed outline of Sabatier's conception of the gospel. It will be observed that its contents are meant to include only such things as are accessible to the individual consciousness. It will be noted also that Christ's relation to our salvation is not that of Redeemer who performed in any sense an objective work for us. He is rather the supreme example of what is to enter into our experience. His experience of the love and power of God in his consciousness is the norm of all religious experience. The idea of salvation must be constructed on the basis of the consciousness of Christ. It spreads, so to speak, from his consciousness to ours.

Professor Lobstein, in his "Introduction to Protestant Dogmatics," while stating more consistently and retaining more adequately the objective element in the Christian Scriptures, and while according perhaps a slightly higher place to Jesus Christ than Sabatier, is nevertheless in substantial agreement with him in his theory of religious authority. In

<sup>8</sup> "Religions of Authority," etc., pp. 366-368.

answering the question how we are to obtain the gospel from the word of God, he asserts that "this revelation is not an abstract idea; it is a manifestation of a creative and redemptive power, a decisive virtue, which, from the consciousness of Jesus, where it reigns in all its fulness, has spread everywhere into the hearts opened to the benign influence which emanates from that mysterious force. . . The content of this revelation does not consist in a system of supernatural notions and inspired doctrines; the living center, the luminous focus, of the gospel is the inner and immediate sense of divine sonship, which is the inspired essence of the self-consciousness of Jesus, the primitive and indestructible experience of his spiritual life, the immovable and permanent principle of his religious testimony and his Messianic activity. That experience, prepared in history by the progressive education to which God submitted humanity, appeared among the people of Israel in Jesus of Nazareth 'in the fulness of time,' and was propagated in the consciousness of the apostles, who were its first witnesses and faithful interpreters. The succeeding generations have been, with regard to the great creative and redemptive facts of the historical appearance of Jesus, in a relationship of dependence which is not limited to the external bond of remembrance or of tradition. Life produces life, and it is only when this Spirit which constituted the very personality of Christ comes to its unfolding in the heart of



man that there is born the new creature called 'the Christian.'"<sup>9</sup>

Again Lobstein affirms that the unity of the dogmatic system is based on the subjective principle and that "we will reject every plan, every arrangement which would seek in external domains for the spiritual reality affirmed by the Christian consciousness; we will try to draw our principle of division out of the very heart of the Protestant faith, the child of the gospel."<sup>10</sup>

It is unnecessary to multiply quotations. Lobstein maintains the subjective conception at all points as the constructive principle in theology. Like Sabatier and the rest, he fails to harmonize it with his own doctrine of the Scriptures and their objective normative value, as we shall see, but he never fails to urge it upon us at all stages of his discussion.

In order to complete our statement of the subjective conception of religious authority, we now set forth the view of Doctor Martineau, as stated in his notable work, "The Seat of Authority in Religion." Doctor Martineau is less trammelled by Christian or evangelical considerations than Sabatier or Lobstein. His estimate of the person of Christ is unembarrassed by the difficulties connected with his incarnation and Messiahship, his atoning death and resurrection, and related subjects. Martineau's point of view frankly repudiates all of these and he

<sup>9</sup> "Introduction to Protestant Dogmatics," translation by A. M. Smith, pp. 159, 160.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 219, 220.

undergoes no moral or spiritual struggles in order to reconcile himself to the repudiation. This cannot be said of his intellectual processes, however, which exhibit phases of marked violence at times, and his dealing with the New Testament records in the effort to discover the consciousness of Christ is arbitrary in the extreme. It is on these very accounts, however, that Martineau is able to state the subjective principle in relation to religious authority with extraordinary clearness and force.

In protesting against the authority of the New Testament, Martineau states the selective principle by means of which we determine what is true and what is false:

"We are not permitted, it would seem, to take our sacred literature as it is, to let what is divine in it find us out, while the rest says nothing to us and lies dead; all such selection by internal affinity is denied us as a self-willed unbelief, a subjection, not of ourselves to Scripture, but of Scripture to ourselves. We are required to accept the whole on the external warrant of its divine authority, which equally applies to all; to believe whatever is affirmed in the New Testament, and practise whatever is enjoined."<sup>11</sup>

Martineau also asserts that nowhere is there offered to us anything but mixed materials in church or Scripture, and that we must needs select and choose and not merely accept:

<sup>11</sup> "Seat of Authority in Religion," p. 173.

"The tests by which we distinguish the fictitious from the real, the wrong from the right, the unlovely from the beautiful, the profane from the sacred, are to be found within, and not without, in the methods of just thought, the instincts of pure conscience, and the aspirations of unclouded reason."<sup>12</sup>

In part, the plea for a subjective criterion of truth is based on the conception of the mind as active and not merely passive in religion. The intellect is not simply a crystal through which light passes as through a transparent but quiescent medium. Man's powers must be respected even in religion and it is urged that any external authority fails to do this, fails to arouse them and call them into activity.

Doctor Martineau leaves us no room to doubt as to the criteria of truth. He makes a distinction between revealed religions and apocalyptic religions. Revealed religions are those in which God and the soul come into direct contact and in which truth is directly authenticated to us within our own spirits. Apocalyptic religions are those which falsely profess to reveal supra-mundane truths or facts, future events or ideas beyond the grasp of our native powers. He denies utterly that man is capable of receiving such ultra-mundane knowledge. He says:

"It is no limitation of his (God's) power to say that into capacity such as ours, and through media such as our dwelling-place affords, the ultra-

<sup>12</sup> "Seat of Authority in Religion," p. 297.

mundane knowledge supposed could not pass and be authenticated. We are not made for its reception; and the earth is not made for its display." <sup>13</sup>

What then are the tests of truth? The answer of Martineau limits truth in the religious sphere to our moral and spiritual axioms or intuitions.

"Where the agent is divine and the recipient human there can be nothing for the mind to do but to let the light flow in, and by the luster of its presence turn each common thought to sanctity: The disclosure must be *self-disclosure*; the evidence, *self-evidence*; the apprehension, as we say, intuitive; something given, and not found. Here then we have the essential distinction . . . that the one (natural religion) is worked out by man through processes which he can count and justify; the other is there by gift of God, so close to the soul, so folded in the very center of the personal life, that though it ever speaks it cannot be spoken of; though it shines everywhere it can be looked at nowhere; and because presupposed as reality it evades criticism as a phenomenon." <sup>14</sup>

It is clear from the above that the only propositions which we are warranted in asserting in religion are moral and spiritual axioms, things which commend themselves to us by their self-evidence. Martineau does not hesitate to apply this principle to the New Testament, and asserts that all its teachings as to Christ's incarnation, Messiahship, and all its

<sup>13</sup> "Seat of Authority," p. 321.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 305, 306.

ultra-mundane teaching on all subjects are simply the apocalyptic and false elements read back into the history after Christ's death, and left in the records by his disciples.

By way of summary of the preceding exposition we have the following as the notes of the criterion of truth in religion as held by the writers whose views we have cited. The criterion is *inward* and not outward; the truth is mentally *assimilated*, not *accepted* on authority; the truth is *achieved* by us, not *donated* to us for acceptance merely; it is personally *constituted* by us, and *not by proxy*; it is *inner verification*, not *unverified acceptance*; it is *intuitive and axiomatic*, not *inferential*; it is opposed to all *externality* and *objectivity* as an authority; it has none of the elements of the Roman Catholic *implicit faith*, which accepts merely on the authority of the Church; it is *spiritual assimilation* rather than *mechanical* adhesion to a creed; it is *scientific* in that it confines its assertions to the facts of the Christian consciousness and rejects *tradition*.

Now it is characteristic of the subjective school of theologians to class all forms of external authority in religion with the Roman Catholic. No compromises are admissible. To make the Bible authoritative is no whit better in principle than to bow to tradition or the pope or the Church. So that modern Protestantism has lapsed sadly from the earlier positions of Luther and the Reformers.

Any external authority in religion is fatal to the interests of religion. It is alleged that the principle of authority cannot be stated in terms which lodge it in the objective world without destroying the freedom and vitality of faith. Modern Protestantism is called upon to repent and cast out its doctrine of an authoritative Bible, and the modern man is called upon to choose between the authoritative absolutism of the Roman Catholic Church and the absolute individualism of the subjective criterion of truth. There is no middle ground.

The position advocated in this treatise is that neither of these views is correct. We are not shut up to the alternative of Romanism and subjectivism. One of these theories assumes man's permanent incapacity and spiritual infancy; the other, his full maturity. Neither is true. One asserts that religious beliefs must all be imposed by an external ecclesiastical authority; the other, that they must all be evolved from the depths of our own consciousness. Neither is true. One assumes that nothing is worthy of belief unless it is the *ipse dixit* of some other human authority; the other, that nothing is worthy of belief unless a man has discovered it himself. Neither is true. The one conceives of the salvation of man as being like the rescue of a horse from a cistern by means of machinery without his intelligent cooperation; the other, as of the Chinaman who fell into the mire and tried to save himself by tugging at his own queue.

Both are wrong. One conceives of man's spiritual intelligence as if he were a grub; the other, as if he were an archangel. He is neither the one nor the other.

We stand for the free development of human personality, the complete unfolding of all man's powers—intellectual, moral, and spiritual—in short, for the perfection of man. But we hold and shall try to show that this end is to be achieved not by the abolition of the principle of authority, but by its recognition. The need to-day is for a clear definition and grasp of the conception of authority, a clearer apprehension, especially of the nature and function and peculiar attributes of religious authority. Christianity as revelation is not merely subjective. It is also objective. Christianity as authority has none of the unlawful elements of ecclesiasticism or other forms of tyranny. It is rather the crystallizing in objective form of the eternal verities of the spiritual universe, a deposit of truth which is consonant with the nature of God and man and all forms of being, and which projected outward from the invisible God upon the stage of history is necessarily in the first instance objective to man and then subjectively apprehended and gradually assimilated by him.

### 3. CRITICISM OF THE SUBJECTIVE PRINCIPLE

In another chapter we propose to examine the relations of empirical science to religion. We,

therefore, defer to that time much that might be said here in criticism of the subjective criterion of religious truth. There are, however, a number of things which should be said now, which have a scientific or philosophic or practical bearing upon our theme.

For one thing, the subjective criterion assumes in an unwarranted manner that the only value of truth to us is to be assimilated by us; that, so to speak, the only function of truth among human interests is to be intellectualized; that until the inner vitalizing and rationalizing process has taken place, truth is of no interest whatever to man in religion. Such a position cannot be maintained either on practical or theoretical grounds. As a matter of fact, all kinds of truth, scientific, philosophic, moral, and religious, come to us in both forms, as subjectively apprehended and as objectively presented and accepted. All human progress is based upon the acceptance of truth achieved by others and its use as the basis for new achievements of our own. These in turn become the basis for the further achievement of those who follow us. Otherwise the fabric of truth would be razed to the ground with each new set of thinkers and a new one attempted. Human thought under such conditions would have a back-and-forth motion, like the old Anglo-Saxon poetry, without progress.

Besides this use of objective truth in acquiring other truth, it is also valuable as a means of adjust-



ing ourselves to the conditions of life. Truth as a rule of conduct is of greater value even than truth as intellectual capital. Just as money has two elements of value, its purchasing power and its value as capital for gaining more money, so truth has these two elements of value. The purchasing power of objective truth is the chief element of value for the common man, just as is the purchasing power of money. To accept moral or religious precepts simply and to live by them secures for mankind at large unspeakable good in the form of peace and joy and hope and power for living and a thousand other forms. If man's chief interest were merely rational, if his mind were simply an intellectual hopper for receiving as much of the grist of the objective world as he could mentally verify for himself, the subjective criterion might serve all his ends. But man is religious and practical as well as intellectual and speculative.

If it be objected at this point that the objective truth which man is warranted in adopting as a rule of conduct must be only such as has been verified by some one or through the combined experience of the race, the reply is that this does not relieve it of the quality so fatal to it in the eyes of all those who adopt the subjective criterion in religion, viz., its externality. We are quite ready to concede and, indeed, to maintain with vigor that objective truth to be valid and binding upon us must of course be truth, just as is truth which verifies

itself in experience. But in the light of the principle advocated by Sabatier and Lobstein and Martineau and the school to which they belong, whenever religious truth comes as dogma, in any other sense than that in which it is the explication or definition of the moral and spiritual intuitions, it at once becomes vitiated by its externalism and partakes of the principle of authority, so much reprobated by them all. The assumption of the subjectivist at this point is that in religion external propositions are either untrue in themselves or untrue for us, and hence irrelevant to us until verified in our own experience. Our own assertion, on the contrary, is the relevancy of all objective truth to us first, in so far as it is really truth; and secondly, in so far as it may be useful in acquiring other truth; and thirdly, in so far as it will aid us in the practical adjustments of life.

Professor Sabatier distinguishes between faith and belief. Faith is the inward principle; belief is the externalization of faith, so to speak, in a proposition. He is quite inconsistent, however, in his maintenance of the distinction. He admits that faith produces belief, and is thus primary and vital. Then he admits further that belief may produce faith. In so doing he forsakes his fundamental principle. For such a use of belief in producing faith is a clear recognition of the function of objective truth in religion, and to this extent a recognition of the principle of external authority.

Sabatier nowhere gives an adequate account of the uses of belief. It tends in his thinking to become a mere by-product of faith with little or no importance of its own. As a matter of fact, belief mediates between faith and faith. It is in part the creation of faith, but in its turn it produces faith. In religion faith becomes explicit in belief, and belief becomes the instrument of faith in producing faith. It is of course inevitable that practical men who know human nature and are familiar with man's religious struggles would recoil from a thorough-going subjectivism. The struggle in the cases of all the writers we have named to make room for some sort of objectivism in their theory is very marked. By minimizing it to the extreme limit they seek to overcome it. Our own view is that they have misconceived the problem, and hence failed in the solution.

Perhaps it may be urged here that our acceptance of objective truth is only in the degree of our assimilation of it. The reply is twofold: First, if this is true, the function and value of objective and even authoritative truth is vindicated by its office of producing results within us. Secondly, objective truth is not limited thus. In a thousand forms we accept truth unverified by ourselves in science as well as in religion. The solution of the problem lies in the direction of ascertaining the laws and the relations which prevail in the interaction of our minds and the world, or how the interaction may

take place and at the same time leave us free. Here again it may be interposed that the objection of the subjectivists is not to external truth, but to the authoritativeness of such truth. To which we reply that according to the definitions of the subjective principle already cited, the one aspect of truth which is most offensive in religion is its externality. It is irrelevant and worthless for religion so long as it remains external. Not until it is assimilated by the mind, mentally digested, so to speak, is it of value. All objective truth according to this view is without religious standing as such. It must be naturalized in the subjective sphere in order to attain such standing. If it is conceived as having objective worth and definite and fixed value and distinct function of any kind in religion, it instantly passes over to the realm of authority. For this reason we have been urging the function of truth as objective as well as subjective in the interest of a legitimate conception of religious authority.

Much of the confusion attending the efforts of the subjectivists arises from a false identification of science and religion. Sabatier asserts that to attempt to combine science and authority is like trying to weld together a clod of clay and an iron bar. Thereupon he identifies the task of religion with that of science and says religion cannot brook the principle of authority. He says: "Quite other is the profound affinity between religion and scien-

tific inspiration. They spring from the same source and tend to the same end, and both manifest the same life of the Spirit. Both are born of a religious love of truth. The spirit of piety adores the truth, even when it does not recognize it; the scientific spirit perhaps seeks for truth without adoring it, but both love it above all else, and devote themselves to it without reserve. They meet and hold communion together in the religion of truth." <sup>18</sup>

It is this complete intellectualizing of religion which constitutes a fundamental fallacy in all Sabatier's reasoning. Along with the effort to make an intellectual and scientific ideal absolute in religion comes numerous other unwarranted things. One of these is the effort to conceive mobility as the leading characteristic of the religious life and that in intellectual terms. Progressive apprehension of truth, while incident to religion, is not its chief characteristic. Progressive realization of righteousness is the religious ideal. Fellowship with God and man and a perfect individual life and social order are the goal of religion. To achieve these ends truth must become static in very large measure, because only thus can it take the form of working principles for practical life. To assimilate truth mentally is widely removed as a process from that by which truth is assimilated in life and conduct. Truth as a rule of conduct

<sup>18</sup> "Religions of Authority," pp. 342, 343.

and means of adjustment to the universe is applied in one way, while truth as intellectual capital for the expansion of the mind is quite another. Of course there is no ultimate contradiction involved, but the spheres of religion and science are so distinct that it is perilous in the highest degree to overlook the difference.

There is a singular absence of sympathy and lack of imagination exhibited by many earnest men of to-day who are bending all their energies to make of science and religion a seamless robe, continuous with each other in all respects. The religious interest is that of man as man, the scientific interest is that of a comparatively few, and when science becomes altruistic enough in spirit to appreciate the tremendous urgency and gravity of the moral and religious task of mankind as distinct from that of science, it will insist less on a procrustean conformity of religion to each passing phase of scientific culture. It will seek rather by tactful and sympathetic adjustment of spheres to become a co-worker with religion, each in its own sphere, toward the great common goal of all human life. It will be found as we proceed that there is a valid point of view which enables us to escape all sense of contradiction as between faith and science. When knowledge of reality is conceived voluntaristically, the difficulties of adjustment in a great measure vanish. It is the rationalistic and abstract point of view against which our argument has been directed. The latter is the

point of view so widely prevalent, which has won the loyalty of numerous modern theologians at the cost of most of the vital characteristics of religion itself.

Not only does the subjective criterion ignore certain functions and uses of truth, but it is also guilty of carrying the principle of individualism to an unwarranted extreme. All human interests are social as well as individual. If a man is incomplete apart from God, so is he incomplete apart from his brother. The interdependence and solidarity of the parts of the social organism are commonplaces of sociological teaching. All human experience inevitably becomes socialized. Its outward expressions take the form of laws and institutions and traditions and canons, rules of action which inevitably become authoritative for society. The particular form assumed is determined by the sphere in which it arises, and the nature of the resultant authority corresponds. Now it is clear that the same law holds in religion as elsewhere. It would indeed be a strange universe if in the lower spheres of human activity, where man can find his way more easily, he were blessed with the operation of this social law, while in the highest of all spheres, where his needs are greatest, he should be deprived of it.

This leads to the remark that none of the champions of subjectivism has sufficiently analyzed the conception of authority. Sabatier, e. g., boldly

promulgates the view that nothing can be authoritative in religion which is not infallible. The Roman Catholic form of infallibility is set up as the sole form of authority in religion, and no variation from it is allowable in any essential particular. Thus he succeeds, as he thinks, in fixing upon Protestants the stigma of blind obedience.

As a matter of fact, however, this procedure is wholly unwarranted. It is a misconception of the nature of authority. It is only by inventing or adopting a form of the conception which varies from the general law that such a case can be made out. In all spheres there is an absolute authority in the background and a concrete expression of it on the lower human plane. The Bible is the concrete expression of religious authority for Protestants. But among them, taking them as a whole, the views as to how it is an authority extend all the way from those who assert the inspiration of the Hebrew vowel-points and the divisions into chapters and verses and the like, out to those who find in the Scriptures simply an authoritative divine message and a saving gospel. At this point we are not discussing the question which of these views is the more correct. Our discussion of the authority of the Scriptures comes later. We simply assert the variety which prevails in the ideal of authority respecting the Scriptures in order to set aside the broad statement that authority in religion is inconceivable save in terms of infallibility. Else-



where men have no difficulty in avoiding this mistake. Parental authority is real, but not infallible. Social authority in many forms is real, but not infallible. Scientific authority is real, but sometimes fallible. In the State authority is very real, but far from perfect. The general principle of authority therefore is exemplified in many forms apart from the attribute of infallibility. This last point is the only one we are concerned in insisting upon here. Whether authority does assume a special form in religion is another question. In the Christian religion the fact of revelation gives rise to peculiar and special conditions which must be taken into account.

It follows from the above that to escape from the social authority in any sphere is to escape from life. There is no way out except by ceasing to be a member of the social organism. The subjectivists, as already noted, endeavor to provide a place for this social influence, but seek to explain it not as authority, but as something which is to them less obnoxious. But this is impossible, since they provide no function for objective truth in their religious scheme, which does not partake of the offensive qualities of authority. It is an impertinence to the religious life.

Lobstein says that in religion man's apprehension of truth is "assent of himself to himself."<sup>16</sup> So far as this is meant to indicate the vitality and

<sup>16</sup> "Introduction to Protestant Dogmatics," p. 129.

inwardness of faith it contains one element of truth. The free action of man's spirit is essential to religion. But as a definition of man's total relation to truth in religion, it is radically defective. Most men in religion do not in the first instance gain an assent of themselves to themselves, but an assent to something other than themselves. With most men religion begins with self-repudiation rather than self-approbation, and in the distinctively Christian experience it always begins with self-renunciation. In the later stage of religious experience they may succeed in some measure in gaining an assent of themselves to themselves. This definition of Lobstein and others is given under the prevailing sense that external and objective truth must needs be arbitrary and improper in religion. This also is an error. All depends on the form of authority, the manner in which it is exercised, and the results in human character, whether it is so or not. At certain stages of man's growth authority is the most merciful and beneficent of arrangements for him. In all stages it is essential in some respects and under certain forms. We propose later to point out the nature of religious authority. Meanwhile we confine our efforts to indicating the defects of an exclusively subjective criterion of truth in religion.

There is a most intimate connection between the subjective standard of religious truth and the theory of knowledge implicitly or explicitly held by its

advocates. That theory finds expression in the "value judgment" of Ritschl and in the Symbolo-Fideism of the French school with which Sabatier is to be classed. As the Ritschlian form of the theory is perhaps more familiar to the reader, we make use of the other form represented in the French school. Critical symbolism is the designation of the point of view which regards all dogmas as symbols rather than as exact expressions of truth. The designation is well fitted to express the provisional and transient aspect of humanly formulated beliefs. Fideism is employed to indicate the inner core of vital faith out of which the dogma arises. It will be seen from these definitions that Symbolo-Fideism does not regard doctrinal development as the attainment in successive stages of definite and permanent results which may henceforth be employed in stable forms for future conquest, but rather as the varying attempts of men to state in symbolic form their apprehension of the phenomena of experience.

This is really a poetic rather than a scientific conception of truth. It is adopted, however, in order to provide an armor of defense against the scientific attack. Faith or the inner vital principle is in and of itself beyond the assaults of unbelief because it is a matter of personal experience. Symbolism places dogma also beyond the power of the enemy because it leaves it wholly indeterminate. A symbol does not bind us to scien-

tific exactness of statement, but leaves the widest margin for variations of interpretation. Science, on the other hand, is characterized by a demand for the most rigorous exactness. It thus easily appears in what sense Symbolo-Fideism is scientific. It is scientific not in the sense that it shares with science the integrity and definiteness and rigorous exactitude of a movement independent in its own sphere, but only in the sense that it feels deeply the need of defining itself in terms which will enable it to live with science. Symbolo-Fideism is a life-preserver donned by theology under the depressing sense of imminent shipwreck. In addition to the advantage of thus providing a *modus vivendi* with science, Symbolo-Fideism is a remarkably expansive theological conception in that it is capable of serving as sanctuary to a host of theological views of most divergent type also laboring under the storm and stress of the scientific attack.

This view of religious truth can scarcely be maintained. It conceives religion in a manner which destroys the greater part of its value for religious purposes. It leaves religious truth wholly indeterminate. It makes the principle of change or "becoming" or mobility absolute in the development of doctrine, so that doctrine ceases to be a tool to work with and becomes merely a sphere for the play of dialectic. It permits no element of positive and final assertion about any of the great realities of religion. It is a device for holding on to and let-

ting go religious truth at the same time. As a matter of fact, its Kantian foundation for its theory of knowledge is an untenable one. Moreover, it smuggles in certain factors and assumes them for the religious life, which the theory of knowledge forbids. It insists much upon our relations to God, the Father, in religious experience. But this it has no right to do on the Ritschlian premises. At least, it has no right to assume the idea of God, the Father, as a permanent and fixed one in theology, because the mobility involved in Symbolo-Fideism opens the door to a rejection of the conception of God, the Father, for some other principle or ideal at any time. Indeed, this step has already been taken by some. God is becoming simply an "appreciation" or "value" in the thinking of many. Indeed, the subjective point of view consistently carried out leaves none of the Christian elements safe. The consciousness of Jesus may serve as a norm for those who have affinities for Jesus, but the religious consciousness of many of the modern subjectivists feels the authority of Jesus as an incubus in the religious life, which men must throw off in order to attain freedom.<sup>17</sup> In the nature of the case this must be so. It is the inevitable logic of the subjective principle. If the principle of authority is rejected in a thorough-going manner, the authority of Jesus disappears.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Geo. B. Foster, "The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence," pp. 207f., 223.

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In order to make clear the fundamental defect in the view we are examining, we may for the present define authority as any external expression of reality or truth or power which is indispensable and binding, which we cannot escape, which is inevitable for us, which environs us so that to escape it we must change the nature of reality itself, or else pursue a course which will destroy ourselves. We can deny such external authority only on the assumption that truth and reality never become definitely crystallized in forms external to us, that human experience never succeeds in attaining to a knowledge of this inevitable and eternal truth, this environing reality in the world about us, to a sufficient degree to enable us to state it in forms which may become working principles for life and thought and conduct which are authoritative for us. This is really the meaning of the Ritschlian and Symbolo-Fideistic conception of religious truth. Truth pervades the world about us somewhat like leaven; it is latent in the universe, implicit but never explicit. We never succeed in formulating it, but only as individuals subjectively assimilate our own measure and degree of it. For whenever ultimate and inevitable truth is formulated into definite propositions these propositions become authoritative. They then impose their law on consciousness, which assimilates them if it can; but consciousness finds itself unable to escape their authority. It is perfectly clear that such a conception destroys the very mean-

ing of the word progress. For the milestones of civilization are the crystallized and authoritative expressions of truth and reality which thought and expression have achieved.

Our relation to truth and reality are not so vague and indeterminate as symbolism contends. Symbolism is one of the most radical forms of evolutionism as applied to the progress of the race. But it is really not warranted by any of the many scientific forms which evolution has assumed. The relation of the organ to environment is not that of a symbol to its potential and indeterminate content of truth or life. Its relation is that of a definite reality in the organism to definite laws and conditions in the environment. These laws and these relations are quite susceptible of definite scientific formulation. There is a vast stretch between a fin and a wing as modes of locomotion. But science does not find the chief use of a fin to consist in its symbolic relation to the wing which it is alleged to become in the course of evolution, or to some mode of locomotion higher than the wing which is to be attained, or to some more vague and indeterminate principle of becoming which is latent in the whole progress. Science reverses this way of regarding the matter, and takes fin and wing and all the other intermediate stages of the progress as concrete embodiments of truth and reality. They are the points of rock which jut above the mysterious sea of being and constitute the only data science

has to build upon. To treat them as symbols is to conjure up a haze to cover them until the points of rock lose their identity and blend again with the blankness of the sea itself. Symbolism appears to be simply an ingenious device for conceding all to science while claiming all for religion at the same time. Religion, however, is the sufferer, for the things which constitute its very life are all placed in jeopardy. If they are retained at all, they are retained in a form which leaves them at the mercy of speculative thought and the protean whimsicalities of our marvelously varied and forever restless modern individualism.

We conclude, therefore, that neither Ritschlianism nor Symbolo-Fideism is a satisfactory view of religious truth. They rest upon a radical agnosticism or a pantheism which cannot supply a safe basis for religion. Religion cannot permanently survive any view which leaves its objects wholly indeterminate. There must be some better way of conceiving the relations of science and religion than either of these ways. Moreover, religion can never flourish save under the stimulus of profound conviction. The intellectualistic interest which dominates Symbolo-Fideism, its excessive sensitiveness to the scientific situation, keeps it continually at the work of adjusting itself to science. Thus it never has sufficient leisure from itself, so to speak, to enable it to devote itself to its own distinctive religious ends and aims. Its fingers are always busy,



at the loom, wherein it hopes to weave religion and science into a seamless garment. The law of the religious life and activity, however, must be imposed by religion itself, not by physical science.

The remark was made that no form of scientific evolution really justifies the theology which makes the principle of mobility absolute. It is only a highly speculative form of evolutionism which can be called into the service of such a theology. It does not fall within our purpose to examine this speculative evolutionism at length. We confine our comments to its bearing upon religion and the religious interest. Called into service as a means of making terms with physical science as we have seen, and as a means of escaping the authoritative-ness of an external world of stable realities, it has, by the inevitable gravitation of its logic, led in some of its advocates, to a rejection of all that is worth while in religion. It seizes upon the obvious fact of motion and change in the physical universe, and applies a principle thus derived from the cosmos to all forms of being including God. The universe as a whole is under the dominion of the all-inclusive law of becoming. Such a view of course cancels itself, because to be consistent change itself would have to change. Becoming would necessarily lapse into being. The static element would enter thus by way of its denial.

What does this speculative evolutionism leave us? For one thing, it leaves a mere ghost of scien-

tific evolution which is shot through, from beginning to end, with teleology, with purpose, and progress. But a goal and a purpose imply a static reality incompatible with mere becoming or change. If there is a goal before the on-going world, then all the details of the progress are to be thought of as subordinate to that, and we have a static world after all. Of course this view cancels human personality, because if personality is in any sense fixed, the discordant static element enters by this door. The law of change forbids us to regard our individual selves as in any sense of the word permanent realities. Immortality in the Christian meaning of the term of course disappears. Fellowship between ourselves and God, which religion teaches, becomes meaningless and empty. For God himself is a part of the sum of totality, of which we also are a part and which forever changes. The gods of men are simply their own creations, which may serve some sort of purpose as "values" or as "appreciations," but have no objective reality. Thus it appears that speculative evolutionism empties out every distinctive element of religion, and leaves it in abject poverty, naked and cold and starving on the philosophic highway of life.

Since the days of Heraclitus and the Eleatics the pendulum of speculative thought has swung between the principle of change and that of permanence as the clue to the meaning of the world. The controversy is endless.

As in all abstract systems of thought, the theory of becoming is built entirely of some one aspect of reality, some fragment of the universe, scaled off and adopted as a major premise for deducing the rest. That change and becoming are facts no one can deny. But permanence is also a fact, and both principles must be recognized if we are to avoid deceiving ourselves. Permanence and change are not problems for thought so much as data of thought. We are not warranted in making one of them absolute in order to cancel the other. We must somehow reconcile, or if we cannot reconcile, we must accept the existence of both. And this means simply that the error of the speculative evolutionist here lies in his taking his standpoint on a single aspect of the physical world instead of human personality. The change of the cosmos may seem to present an irreconcilable conflict with the conception of a static universe. But that conflict ceases in the human personality, which contains both the element of change and the element of permanence. We can only explain ultimate reality in terms of the highest we know, and personality is the highest phase of being known to us, and contains in itself the greatest promise for the solution of the mysteries of thought without canceling any part of the reality in the interest of any other part. Speculative evolutionism assumes the incompetence of religion to supply from her own resources the laws of her existence, and imposes a

law upon her from an alien sphere. It crucifies religion upon the cross of intellectualism.

Schleiermacher, whose influence began to be powerfully exerted at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was the first modern writer to give coherent expression to the Christian consciousness as the seat of authority in religion. All more recent views run back in principle to that of Schleiermacher. Their implications are essentially the same with his. Now Schleiermacher was decidedly pantheistic in his starting-point. His doctrinal system and his "Speeches on Religion" exhibit everywhere his effort to graft Christian truth into a pantheistic stock. He struggled hard over the idea of the personality of God, and never clearly grasped it, much less worked with it consistently in his teaching. The pantheism underlying the subjective principle is easy to understand. If God is a person, the truth about him, when we learn it, becomes definite and clear in meaning. When it becomes thus definite and clear in meaning we may frame it into doctrines. These doctrines become our guides to correct relations with God. Thus they become authoritative.

If the universe, on the other hand, is not personal, if pantheism is true, then such authoritative statements are impossible. Each individual consciousness is equally an expression of the true meaning of the world. If there is no personality above our finite personalities, then each one of us is a law

unto himself. The impersonal world-ground comes to expression in each of us. Humanity is like a vast flower-bed with an infinite variety of flowers. The same sap produces them all. Each consciousness is a valid and correct blossoming of the sap into human experience. Error cannot exist since there is no higher standard than the individual consciousness. A has no more right to dispute B, Paul has no more right to dispute Schleiermacher, than a rose has a right to dispute an orchid.

It is but natural that men so spiritual and earnest as Sabatier and Lobstein should recoil from the consequences of a radical subjectivism in religion. They clearly saw that unless faith were anchored to something objective the tides and winds would keep it forever drifting on the sea of thought. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that both these writers, whose advocacy of the subjective criterion we have already pointed out, should make an effort to protect their principle against its own inherent perils. This they attempt to accomplish by setting up the Scriptures as indispensable to faith while eliminating as far as possible the obnoxious element of authority. The result is a pronounced dualism in the point of view of both writers and a futile effort to maintain a thorough-going subjectivism along with some sort of authority. They themselves repeatedly declare the irreconcilable discords between faith and authority, and yet place faith in leading-strings to an external norm of truth and

life. If they had simply conceived vitality and inwardness as necessary to faith, they would have preserved its integrity and power intact. Then they could have gone on to assert also the necessity of authority to faith, and have been in a position to expound the true nature of religious authority. But instead of this they expressly and repeatedly repudiate authority, and then inconsistently call it in to assist at the ceremony of installing and crowning the subjective criterion. They sometimes try to distinguish between a norm or indispensable source and the idea of authority. But so long as the norm or source is held to be the only means of producing faith, the only criterion of the gospel, it is indistinguishable from the objective standard which they so much reprobate. It is the setting up of such a standard as independent of faith and as the cause and source of faith. It places credentials in the hands of an objective guide in religion and specializes its function and, in short, validates it as an authority.

Professor Lobstein recognizes the necessity of the Scriptures more adequately than Sabatier, perhaps, and suggests a conception of the gospel more nearly in accordance with the New Testament. As to authority in religion he says:

"There is a second point which must always be emphasized, because it is always forgotten. If there are serious and earnest Protestants who have any difficulty in conceiving the notion and the rôle of

religious authority, is it not because they have so much difficulty in establishing it on moral and spiritual grounds? One insists on thinking that the moral certitude is less than material or scientific certitude; one confuses the three orders of greatness so admirably defined and distinguished by Pascal; one imagines that an authority which lays claim to the conscience only could not be an absolute authority." Again he says: "This truth which makes believers and is accessible only to believers, the fact which gives life to faith, that is precisely the gospel, the word of God, the divine revelation in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is not my personal experience which makes the gospel and which creates authority; on the contrary, it is the gospel which, rising on the horizon of my history, entering into the sphere of my soul, penetrating to the very center of my life, determines, by its influence and its intrinsic force, an inner and decisive crisis by virtue of which I decide, believe, obey, love, surrender. Without this divine word which has awakened my soul, I should continue to sleep my sleep, troubled perhaps by prophetic dreams, but a sleep always overwhelming and at last fatal."

The above has an excellent ring from the point of view of all who desire to preserve an authoritative Scripture. But in the next sentence Lobstein proceeds to say that this authoritativeness of the word of God or gospel is confined to such truths

as the believer can assimilate. Thus: "On the other hand, it is true the gospel remains for me a closed or dead letter if I do not assimilate to myself its divine content by a voluntary and free act, solicited, made possible, realized within me by means of that same gospel which frees me while it enslaves me, and which guarantees my independence, while creating my submission."<sup>18</sup> Further Lobstein says: "Our experience does not make truth, but it does make it our own; it does not produce religious authority, but it does give it its hold upon our consciousness and submits our inner life to it."<sup>19</sup>

We have already seen<sup>20</sup> how Lobstein defines this inner experience. It is not a set of supernatural notions and inspired doctrines, but rather "the inner and immediate sense of divine sonship which is the inspired essence of the self-consciousness of Jesus." We also saw how he declared: "We will reject every plan, every arrangement which would seek in external domains for the spiritual reality affirmed by the Christian consciousness." It is quite evident, therefore, that Lobstein limits the authority of the Scriptures, or the content of the Scriptures, to the moral and spiritual intuitions, such truths as each one may verify for himself.

In like manner Sabatier recognizes the indispen-

<sup>18</sup> "Introduction to Protestant Dogmatics," p. 135.

<sup>19</sup> "Introduction to Protestant Dogmatics," p. 136.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 29.



sableness of Scripture. He writes: "The gospel properly becomes the law of the human consciousness and is forever inseparable from it,"<sup>21</sup>

Sabatier, in defining our relation to Christ, says: "Nevertheless it is evident why in the normal course of things the person of Christ is the essential factor in the Christian religion, and why Christianity cannot be severed from him without death. . . This is why the heart of every Christian is bound to Jesus Christ, and must ever be so bound; bound to the story of his outward life as the type of life which it is his task to reproduce, bound to his person as the source of holy inspiration, without which it can do nothing. The full and normal development of the Christian consciousness can take place only under the influence of Christ. He is the vine whose sap flows into the branches. His consciousness is the generating cell, whence proceed all other like cells of that social organism which Paul calls his body, and of which his Spirit is the common, sovereign soul."<sup>22</sup>

In one paragraph Sabatier declares that the Scriptures are "the necessary starting-point of all religious and dogmatic development"; "having preceded all forms of later tradition, it is the historic norm by which these may and should be controlled, that we may know to what degree they adhere to or depart from the primitive

<sup>21</sup> "Religions of Authority," p. 323.

<sup>22</sup> "Religions of Authority," p. 334.

essence of Christianity"; "all dogmas come from Scripture by way of interpretation; all go back to it as their original source or warrant."<sup>23</sup> These statements seem quite in the order of the widely prevalent Protestant view of an authoritative Bible. Yet in the same paragraph with the above statement we find the following: "Theology is not bound under the yoke of biblical conceptions, but it is clear that no new dogmatic expression would be legitimately Christian if it contradicted the spirit of the Bible and was bound by no tie to primitive Christian experience, of which the Bible is the authoritative document." The paragraph closes with the sentence: "The Bible is not an authority for theology, but it will ever be an indispensable means of historic explanation and religious control of theology." How to discriminate between "authority" and "religious control" is a rather perplexing question. As indicative of how thoroughly Sabatier is wedded to the subjective principle, we cite one other passage among many: The gospel is defined in terms of our moral and spiritual intuition: "There is nothing in the gospel which your conscience may not recognize as that highest good to which secretly it aspires; nothing which, if you sincerely desire it, you cannot yourself experience, and thus recognize it as the very soul of your soul."<sup>24</sup>

Here again Sabatier reduces the gospel and the

<sup>23</sup> "Religions of Authority," p. 360.

<sup>24</sup> "Religions of Authority," p. 328.

authoritative element of Scripture to the moral and spiritual intuitions.

Now this adherence to an objective "norm" of control, this adoption of the Scriptures as regulative in theology is quite in harmony with the generally received view as far as it goes. It asserts that in the course of history there has arisen a form of religious experience to which the soul of man responds, and that this form of experience has been enshrined first in the consciousness of Christ and then in a literary record, and that because of our ability to verify it, each of us for himself, we are to regard this form of experience as final for the religious life. It is not so much what it includes as what it excludes that renders this view inadequate as a statement of the relation of Scripture to religious experience. Two or three of its assumptions cannot endure careful scrutiny. It assumes that whatever a man can assimilate is the form of religious experience he should cultivate, and then asserts that there is but one form of that experience for all. This would be regarded as intolerable by all who do not respond to these particular moral and spiritual intuitions which these writers adopt as the essential content of religion.

The wide-spread prevalence of the Christian ideal of the religious life is indeed a marvelous tribute to its essential and fundamental truth. But in our day there are not wanting in large numbers men and women who repudiate the Christian norm of

both ethics and religion. The type of thought inaugurated by Nietzsche and advocated by so many in recent years will repudiate the Christian intuitions, which seem so completely to satisfy the writers under review. "The only golden rule is that there is no golden rule," is a saying which very well characterizes this type of opinion. It holds that Christianity is a moral and spiritual disease, an incubus which has been fixed upon the race two thousand years, utterly destructive of all the highest and best qualities of manhood, and that the only hope of the race is to cast it off. The adherents of such a view of course rebel in most vigorous fashion against binding the race back to a "gospel," or a "norm," or a "word of God," or an alleged group of moral intuitions derived from the record of the life of an individual Jew who lived two thousand years ago. They will repudiate this procedure as a return to Roman Catholicism, to mere externalism in authority, and a repudiation of all that civilization has attained in the struggle for freedom.

Besides Nietzsche and those who follow him, there is a group of modern biblical students who deny that we can through the Gospels arrive at any reliable picture of Jesus at all. The view propounded by Strauss long ago and that of Schmiedel and others more recently illustrate what is meant. Schmiedel reduces the authentic sayings of Jesus in the records to a number which can almost be

told off on the fingers of one hand. Moral intuition does not enable these men to accomplish the results so confidently claimed by the advocates of the subjective criterion. For them it leads to utter negation. The New Testament records, they claim, were written to prove a case, and are utterly unreliable as history. Hence the facts as to what Jesus was and what he taught lie beyond our reach. Thus an exclusively subjective criterion delivers us over bound hand and foot to the most radical opponents of the claims of Jesus in all respects.

There is no way to answer these men if we attach ourselves to the view that the sole means for determining the truth of the New Testament records is the appeal which these records make to our individual consciousness. The reply might be made to them that although the Gospels were written with a purpose, they cannot be successfully assailed on the general assumption that every record written with a purpose is false. Both purpose and record might be in conformity with the highest truth. The subjectivists, however, cut themselves off from this mode of reply, because they too assume the unreliability of all that part of the record which clashes with their moral sense.

It is clear, therefore, that the subjectivists have not solved the problem satisfactorily. If they are consistent with the subjective principle, then there is no way to establish the Christian intuitions on a more firm basis than other forms of belief. Every

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man will claim the truth and finality of the particular form of religious experience which appeals to him. The subjective principle, in short, does not admit of indissoluble attachment to any external "control" in the gospel, the New Testament, or anywhere else. Hence our assertion that the views of Sabatier and Lobstein exhibit an irreconcilable dualism or contradiction.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT RECORDS

#### I. THE CENTRAL PLACE OF JESUS IN CURRENT THOUGHT

Slowly the issues between the Christian religion and its adversaries have converged during the last few decades upon the supreme question as to the person of Jesus. With increasing clearness men have seen that their judgment concerning Christ is the judgment of Christianity. Controversy about the Nicene and Chalcedonian formulations of the doctrine of his person has given place to debate as to the New Testament teachings as a whole, and this in turn has been narrowed to the issue as to the records of our four Gospels. Here again the controversy has tended to confine itself to the synoptic Gospels. The Gospel of John is not employed for apologetic purposes to any great extent, because of its later date and because its reliability as a historic record has so often been called in question in critical circles. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are at present the storm-center, and the "synoptic problem" has become the watchword of critical activity. Here again the tendency is to pass beyond the historical

events and circumstances narrated in the Gospels into the consciousness of Jesus himself.

This last is the chief subject of investigation to-day. It is attended in the nature of the case with insuperable difficulties. Psychology has made known to us no means by which we are enabled to enter and reproduce the consciousness of another, much less when the other is so exceptional and exalted in character as Jesus of Nazareth. We are limited, of course, to such intimations of his consciousness as are left to us in his words and actions and in his general bearing during his earthly ministry. We are to inquire in this chapter what is the result of this recent attempt by scientific methods to attain a knowledge of the consciousness of Jesus. Its bearing upon our general subject is obvious enough upon slight reflection. All who cling to an exclusively subjective criterion of religious truth and who at the same time wish to be regarded as Christians, undertake to show that the consciousness of Jesus is reproduced in the believer, and that this is the sum of religion. It is entirely clear that here is a parting of the ways in the views of men as to the person of Jesus. If his consciousness contained no element which may not be reproduced in ours, if he sustained no relationship to God and man essentially different from ours, if he was simply that perfect ideal of manhood and religious devotion of which we are imperfect approximations, then our view of his person will determine our attitude



toward him on one plane. If, on the other hand, there were factors in his consciousness and relations sustained by him, which we do not and cannot recapitulate in our own experience, then our attitude to him will be determined upon another plane. His person will be thus placed upon a level which will require us to regard him as more than "the prince of saints," and his authority will be enhanced in a measure which will correspond with his exaltation. Thus also the question of authority in religion will receive a new determination for all those who attach themselves to him.

Before we proceed to our specific task, one or two remarks are in order as to the results of historical and critical exegesis of the New Testament generally in the matter of the person and work of Christ. It can be asserted with confidence that the preponderant, not to say overwhelming, consensus of scholarship of all types of theological opinion now recognizes that in the writings of Paul and John, and in general in the New Testament writings outside of the synoptic Gospels, the doctrines of Christ's preexistence and of the atoning efficacy of his death are taught. As a mere matter of exegesis, the agreement on these points is sufficiently general to warrant us in assuming it without attempting in detail to show it, even if space and the object we have in view admitted of extensive discussion of the point. This exegetical agreement by no means implies perfect agreement as to

the exact contents of the preexistence or of the atonement idea. In this respect there is yet much divergence. Still less does it imply general acceptance of the New Testament teaching on these points by all students and critics. Philosophical presuppositions and general world-views in many instances seem to those who hold them to forbid the acceptance as doctrinally true of what is clearly imbedded in the heart of the New Testament teaching. It is held that these and many other New Testament ideas are the result of speculation or of Jewish ideas and influences imported into the religion of Jesus. Our object in calling attention to this exegetical agreement is simply that we may understand how narrowly the problem is now limited to the synoptic Gospels and in particular to the question of the consciousness of Jesus.

## 2. RECENT CRITICISM OF THE GOSPELS

The "synoptic problem," or the problem of determining by means of scientific and critical methods the relations of Matthew, Mark, and Luke to each other as to source and origin, is one of the most complex and difficult with which criticism has to deal. It is no part of our undertaking to attempt its solution. It is necessary for us, however, to offer a brief sketch of the present status of this problem and to indicate its bearing upon the question of the consciousness of Jesus.

To-day in the world of critical scholarship efforts

more elaborate and painstaking than at any former time are being put forth to clear up the "synoptic problem." A great variety of answers have been given. Quite generally the Gospel of Mark is dealt with as, in considerable measure, independent of Matthew and Luke. The close correspondence between certain sections of Matthew and Luke has led an increasing number of scholars to the view that these common sections of the First and Third Gospels are based upon a non-extant source referred to by Papias as *Logia*, or "sayings," of the Lord. Professor Harnack has gone carefully over the ground, and has given exhaustive analyses of the material involved in his work entitled "The Sayings of Jesus: The Second Source of Saint Matthew and Saint Luke." In summing up the contents of the document made up of sayings of Jesus, designated by the critics for convenience as document Q, Harnack calls attention to its homogeneousness. It was made up chiefly of the teachings of Jesus, and belongs, therefore, to an early period before the varied elements found in the later Gospel narratives were introduced. In Mark the supernatural is emphasized, Matthew has written in an apologetic interest, and Luke presents Jesus as the Great Healer. But in Q we find no such unifying purpose which governed in its composition unless it be simply the author's desire "to illustrate our Lord's message and his witness to himself, in their main and characteristic features, by especially

striking examples.”<sup>1</sup> Professor Harnack thinks that Q was an older document than Mark, and indeed that it is difficult to establish any sort of relationship between them.<sup>2</sup> Professor Wellhausen, on the contrary, holds, for reasons it is unnecessary to give here, that Mark is the older of the two. Rev. Sir John C. Hawkins also gives us elaborate and careful analyses of the contents of the synoptic Gospels from various points of view and in many forms. He concludes that the identities of the language between the different Gospels suggest strongly the use of written Greek documents. There are, however, distinct traces also of oral transmission. He thinks Mark and Luke made use of written documents as their chief, although not exclusive, sources; and that Matthew and Luke both probably employed Mark and the Logia, composed by Matthew, in accordance with the testimony of Papias.<sup>3</sup>

In the above statements it doubtless has been noted that the tendency to refer Mark to an early date and to trace Matthew and Luke to Mark and the source Q becomes more pronounced as investigation advances. It is very difficult, however, to narrow the evidence down to one or two original sources for our synoptic Gospels, and consequently there are not wanting able writers who lay less emphasis upon Q as a source, and insist that the

<sup>1</sup> “Sayings of Jesus,” p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup> Hawkins, “*Horae Synopticae*,” pp. 217, 218.

evidence points to numerous sources. Prof. E. D. Burton finds as a result of a careful study of the synoptic Gospels that Matthew and Luke made use of Mark as one source at least, that they also possessed in common another source which is referred to as the Galilean document, and another called the Perean document. Matthew, Doctor Burton thinks, but not Luke, also employed the Logia document spoken of by Papias. For the first and third evangelists there must have been also additional minor sources. The question of the sources behind Mark and the Perean document, Professor Burton considers an unsolved problem.<sup>4</sup>

It is evident from the foregoing summary of opinion that the "synoptic problem" is as yet far from solution. It may be, and indeed has been, questioned whether a solution is possible by means of the methods usually employed by criticism. The results of the critical effort may be briefly stated. In our quest for sources of information as to Jesus and his teachings and as to early Christianity in general, unless we employ the Gospels as they stand we are debarred from other documentary sources except the "original" Mark, which is nearly identical with our present Mark; and along with this the document Q, containing large sections of our present Matthew and Luke, which are not contained in Mark. These two sources at least have been

<sup>4</sup> E. D. Burton, "Principles of Literary Criticism and the Synoptic Problem," pp. 52, 53.

defined with sufficient clearness to make them available for use, apart from the ultimate question of the correctness of the critical judgment which yields them. So far as our argument is concerned, we may and shall employ these two sources.

What knowledge then do these sources yield us as to the consciousness of Jesus? Professor Harnack surmises that the Logia document was compiled to "illustrate our Lord's message and his witness to himself, in their main and characteristic features, by especially striking examples." Do we learn then from the Logia and Mark that Jesus was simply the "prince of saints," or was he more? According to its testimony can we classify him with other men or does he stand apart: Was he a part of his own message, was he the object of faith, or simply a teacher? Was he simply a "Jew" and not even a "Christian," as Wellhausen asserts?<sup>5</sup>

If now we trace the sayings of Jesus in the Logia, which in an especial manner are significant for his person and for his relations to faith, we find that this greatly abbreviated section, containing material common to Matthew and Luke, and most carefully detached from the Gospels themselves by critical analysis, yields a remarkable result. There is no essential characteristic of Jesus recorded in these Gospels elsewhere, which are not also found in this common document which criticism assumes to

<sup>5</sup> Wellhausen, "*Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*," p. 113.

underlie both Matthew and Luke. The texture exhibits the same threads of material in these sections as elsewhere, which clearly evidences the fact that the fabric is consistently woven throughout.

We call attention first of all to certain sayings of Jesus regarding himself, or utterances which in a special manner enable us to arrive at a knowledge of the way in which Jesus regarded himself. The note which rings clear throughout this source, if not at every point, at least with sufficient frequency to make it a distinct characteristic, is the absoluteness and finality of the words of Jesus. It is not so much that these qualities are asserted—though they are at times asserted—as that they are assumed. In the Beatitudes, for example, Jesus speaks with the note of absolute authority. He does not base his words directly upon the authority of God here as was the custom of the prophets. The prophets authenticated their message uniformly with a “thus saith the Lord.” Jesus assumes authority himself. It is a curious fact that John’s Gospel, in which more distinctly and specifically than in the synoptics we find the theological and transcendental view of Christ’s person, we also find a more distinctive and frequent assertion of his dependence upon the Father in his teaching and his work. If John had been constructing an imaginary history to prove Christ’s deity, it would have been to his interest to suppress these sayings; and if the synoptics had been bent upon recording the events of a merely

human life unremoved in any essential respect from other human lives, their interest would have been to omit all such elements from their narratives as would seem to point to a character transcending these limits.

In Matthew 5: 11 Jesus pronounces those blessed who shall be persecuted and spoken against falsely "for my sake." In the corresponding passage in Luke,<sup>6</sup> which exhibits other verbal variations, the phrase is "for the Son of man's sake." Professor Harnack, because of this difference, omits both forms of the saying from the Logia.<sup>7</sup> This would scarcely seem to be justified. There is a parallel of thought as well as of language in the two passages. It seems unlikely, therefore, that two different forms of statement identical in meaning would have been derived by the evangelists from independent sources in the midst of a context drawn from a common source. That is to say, identity of meaning implies identity of source in such a context. Besides, as Professor Denney has pointed out, Luke might have felt that the phrase "Son of man's sake" had a certain rhetorical advantage over the phrase "for my sake," when the bodily presence of Him who spoke the words could no longer enforce them.<sup>8</sup>

What, then, do these words imply: "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for

<sup>6</sup> Luke 6: 22.

<sup>7</sup> Harnack, "Sayings of Jesus," p. 255.

<sup>8</sup> James Denney, "Jesus and the Gospel," pp. 215, 216.



my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.”<sup>9</sup> Here Jesus identified the cause for which his hearers shall suffer with himself. The prophets were persecuted for Jehovah’s sake and their identification with his cause upon earth. The disciples will endure the hostility of the world for Jesus’ sake and their identification with his cause. It may not be proper to press the implied parallel between Jehovah and Jesus here beyond the obvious limits suggested by the words themselves. But no possible explanation can empty them of their unique significance. His person and their relations to it supply the motives which shall give them courage and power to endure, which shall justify them in the renunciation of all things and the endurance of all things.

We turn to various other details recorded in Q. Here, as elsewhere, both in his formal expression, “I say unto you,” as well as in numerous commands, Jesus appears as legislator. “I say unto you: Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors,” etc.<sup>10</sup> Again, “Wherefore I say unto you: Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat,” etc.<sup>11</sup> “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father.”<sup>12</sup> It does not

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 5 : 11, 12.

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 5 : 44f.; Luke 6 : 22f.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 6 : 25f.; Luke 12 : 22f.

<sup>12</sup> Matthew 7 : 21, 24-27; Luke 6 : 46f.

suffice to explain this as if Jesus were pointing away from himself to God and excluding himself from any relationship to human faith. For the language clearly implies that it is proper to call him Lord. Yet some of those who do so will be insincere or false disciples. In the same context Jesus says: "Every one therefore that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will show you whom he is like."

Again in his instructions to the disciples as he sends them forth to preach the kingdom of God he indicates the momentous issues which hang upon the acceptance or rejection of the message by the people. "Verily I say unto you: It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in that day than for that city."<sup>18</sup> Thus the coming of the kingdom of God and the appearance of Jesus are indissolubly bound together. The attitude of men toward him is their attitude toward the kingdom. The doom of the cities of the plain was to the Jews the most fearful type of doom which could be named. Evidently he who uttered such words was conscious of a mission and authority which forbid our classifying him with other teachers or with the prophets of Israel. In further illustration of his supremacy in determining human conduct he declares: "Think ye that I came to send peace on the earth? I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 11 : 24; Luke 10 : 12.

daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”<sup>14</sup> It is difficult for us who have become so familiar with these words to appreciate their revolutionary character in the ears of a Jew of Jesus’ day. With the Jew in a special degree family ties were inviolate. The accent of individuality in these words, the value of man as man, the worth and significance of personality in religion, which they evince, to say nothing of the daring and challenging form in which the truth is stated, lift these words to a very high plane. Above all are we impressed with the assumption of authority in determining human relationships on the part of the speaker.

In close connection with the above passage a number of other sayings may be appropriately considered. “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son and daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”<sup>15</sup> These words clearly imply that in setting up conflict in the members of the same household his own person is the disturbing factor. It is not merely that his words shall become a source of discord, but that he himself shall be that source. The one rival to all other loves is love to him. His supremacy is so great that all other known ties are subject to it. “Whosoever doth not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.”<sup>16</sup> Thus

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 10 : 34; Luke 12 : 51f.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 10 : 37; Luke 14 : 26.

<sup>16</sup> Matthew 10 : 38; Luke 9 : 23.

he definitely declares himself to be the subject of religious pursuit, the archetype and goal of moral and spiritual endeavor. As if to discriminate still further between himself and his message, Jesus declares: "The disciple is not above his master, neither the servant above his Lord. It is sufficient for the disciple that he become as his master and the servant as his Lord."<sup>17</sup> It is not easy to reconcile this saying of Jesus with the view that he was simply the revealer of the ideal of the religious life with no further significance for that life in his own person. He is not only the teacher of the principles of discipleship; he is also the Lord of the disciple. The Christian life revolves around his person. Again he says: "Whosoever receiveth you receiveth me, and whosoever receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."<sup>18</sup> Here he identifies recognition of himself with recognition of the Father who sent him. Thus he becomes the mediator of the knowledge of God to men, through whom the kingdom of heaven is to be founded.

Another notable saying of Jesus found in Q we note in this connection: "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak a word against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him."<sup>19</sup> We do not enter into the much-discussed question of the meaning of the phrase "Son of

<sup>17</sup> Matthew 10 : 24; Luke 6 : 40.

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 10 : 40; Luke 10 : 16.

<sup>19</sup> Matthew 12 : 32; Luke 12 : 10f.

man" as employed by Jesus. But, upon any view of its origin, its Messianic import is too generally accepted by scholars of the first rank to admit of serious doubt on this point. In the words we have quoted Jesus clearly classifies himself in some sense with the Holy Spirit. The "Son of man" must have been a personage of no ordinary dignity and authority for him to be coupled in the same sentence with the Spirit of God when reference was made to an unpardonable sin. No doubt this impression as to the dignity and authority of the Son of man in this passage is derived in part from the general effect of Christ's teachings elsewhere, but it is none the less justified but rather the more warranted on that account.

A passage which is wholly inexplicable on any view of Jesus which asserts with Bousset that "he never overstepped the limits of the purely human,"<sup>20</sup> is that in Matthew 10: 32, 33 and Luke 12: 8, 9. It reads: "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but whosoever will deny me before men, him will I also deny before the angels of God." Can it be justly asserted in the light of such a saying as this that Jesus in no sense included himself as a part of his message, and that the Christianity of Jesus would remain, even if Jesus himself should disappear altogether? Surely we have in this saying a warrant for the central

<sup>20</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 202.

place Jesus holds in the thought of the earliest Christians in so far as that thought is reflected in the epistles of the New Testament. Words like these have no place in the mouth of an ordinary prophet. They have no place on the lips of any sane teacher, however exalted in moral character, who moves on the same plane with other men. One cannot fail to sympathize with the feeling of Doctor Martineau, whose views we consider farther on, in dealing with passages of this kind in the life of Jesus so long as one looks at Christ's person from Doctor Martineau's point of view. He eliminates passages which represent Jesus as assuming undue importance on the ground that they are inconsistent with his character as the most pious of men, "the prince of saints." The pious man is humble and unassuming. We can with unerring certainty discern those words which came from Jesus himself, because they constitute a consistent and harmonious whole. Other alleged sayings of Jesus which conflict with those which are self-evident must be regarded as the result of the corrupting influences of the faith of disciples which read back into the sayings of Jesus much that was not originally there. With Doctor Martineau's premises his conclusion follows. If Jesus was simply the highest type of piety the race has known, and nothing more, then words which make him the object of human faith and the center of human conduct have no application to him.

Another passage of the document Q which assists us in our effort to understand the consciousness of Jesus is that in which he replies to the messengers from John the Baptist. The first point to be noted is that Jesus points to his miracles as signs of his Messianic calling. That this was the understanding of the narrators cannot be doubted. Matthew refers to them as the signs of the Christ. Secondly, Jesus utters a remarkable Beatitude upon believers in him in these words: "Blessed is he whosoever shall find no cause of stumbling in me." Here again we have a singularly clear note from Jesus as to his central place in human faith. Prof. James Denney is so impressed with this word of Jesus that he remarks as follows: "This sentence may be easily passed by, but there is not a word in the Gospel which reveals more clearly the solitary place of Jesus. It stands on the same plane with those wonderful utterances in which he speaks of confessing him before men, of hating father and mother, son and daughter for his sake. It makes the blessedness of men depend upon a relation to himself; happy with the rare and high happiness on which God congratulates man, is he who is not at fault about Jesus, but takes him for all that in his own consciousness he is. . . Taking this simple sentence in its simplicity, we do not hesitate to say of it, as of Matthew 10:32, that there is nothing in the Fourth Gospel which transcends it."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Denney, "Jesus and the Gospel," pp. 231, 232.

In the next place we note the reference to John made by Jesus in the passage under consideration as the forerunner of the Messiah referred to in the Old Testament. "This is he of whom it is written: Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." There is some debate as to whether these words are inserted by the compiler of the Logia or were uttered by Jesus and reported by him. It seems to the present writer that the preponderance of considerations favors the view that Jesus uttered them himself. In any event, it is perfectly clear that if the words were added, they were introduced as harmonious with the words of the context, which are indubitably given as the words of Jesus himself. In that case, to the writer of the Logia there was no violence, but rather fitness in applying to the Messiah words which originally, as the prophet Malachi<sup>22</sup> uttered them, had reference to Jehovah. Thus the words become an interpretation of the words of Jesus in the context.

In this passage Jesus makes the notable deliverance concerning John the Baptist that "there hath not arisen among those born of women a greater than John the Baptist"; and along with this the even more notable declaration that "he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he,"<sup>23</sup> thus indicating the supreme significance, in the estima-

<sup>22</sup> Malachi 3 : 1.

<sup>23</sup> Matthew 11 : 11; Luke 7 : 28.



tion of Jesus, of the kingdom of God which he, as Messiah, had come to establish. And as still further signaling the transition which his own coming had brought about he says: "The prophets and the law were until John; from then until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."<sup>24</sup> In connection with this saying we note also the woes pronounced upon Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum because of their moral blindness and stubbornness in the presence of the supremely significant revelation which he brings and the implied declaration that human destiny hangs upon men's relations to him.

We come next to one of the most notable of all sayings of Jesus in the Gospels. "At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him."<sup>25</sup> There are several exegetical and critical questions connected with this passage which our purpose does not require us to take up in detail. It is a part of the common source of Matthew and Luke, and

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 11 : 12; Luke 16 : 16.

<sup>25</sup> Matthew 11 : 25-27; Luke 10 : 21, 22.

no critical objections urged against it as yet warrant us in concluding that the above is not in all essential particulars the original form of the saying.

What, then, does the passage mean? In it Jesus declares that he is the sole organ of the revelation of God to man, and that all the resources of divine knowledge are placed at his disposal. Through him and him alone may men attain a true knowledge of God. He refers to himself as "the Son" and to the Father as "the Father," thus suggesting a relationship lifted above all ordinary relationships between man and God.

Doctor Martineau thinks it is quite possible to extract from the Gospel records the true sayings of Jesus, because they bear on their face a self-evidencing witness, while those which were falsely attributed to him can be discovered by their contrast with the authentic sayings. In this passage he brings to bear his discriminating faculty. He asserts that the thanksgiving sentence of the prayer is quite in harmony with the known character of Jesus, and that it, therefore, belongs to the "unspoiled tradition." But the other sentences of Jesus, in which he declares his unique relationship to the Father and sets himself forth as the sole bearer of the knowledge of the Father, do not belong to the time of Jesus at all. The expression "the Son" and "the Father" belong to a later dogmatic and theological period, and they were simply put into the lips of Jesus by the evangelists long afterward. No

really pious man, Doctor Martineau thinks, and especially none so transcendently pious as Jesus, could have arrogated to himself such language as this. No exegetical or critical grounds are urged by Doctor Martineau against the words which warrant his bold elimination of them from the text. It is his consciousness at work with the records, and with this alone as his guide he reconstructs and reverses the meaning of many important passages.<sup>28</sup>

Professor Harnack has given more attention to the critical aspects of the question, but finds no real justification for a repudiation of these words of Jesus. Following some later variations in the Western texts of the Gospels, he succeeds in finding ground for changing the tense of the verb translated *knoweth*, and for one or two other slight modifications. He is thus led to reject the readings of the canonical text in the interest of readings which relieve the passage in some degree of their offensive Christological implications. He indicates rather clearly, however, that his chief grounds for rejecting the reading as we have it in Matthew and Luke are identical with those of Doctor Martineau. This passage is "Johannine" in its teachings and, therefore, could not have been the report of the actual words of Jesus. Professor Harnack says: "The original version of the saying (in Q) may be defended on

<sup>28</sup> Martineau, "Seat of Authority in Religion," pp. 582-585.

good grounds; but the canonical version in both Gospels is 'Johannine' in character and indefensible."<sup>27</sup> Numerous other writers agree with these. They simply refuse to entertain the idea that any passage in the Gospels can be genuine which points to anything in the character of Jesus which transcends the "purely human."

It is not our purpose to develop in detail the numerous sayings of Jesus recorded in the document Q. This would require more space than the plan of this work admits. It is sufficient for our argument that we condense into brief compass those sections of Q which assist us in our effort to understand the consciousness of Jesus. We deal, therefore, even more concisely with the sayings which follow than with those previously noted. There is some question as to the order of the reported sayings in some instances. We follow in the main the order suggested in Professor Harnack's translation of Q.<sup>28</sup>

As suggesting the supreme significance of his advent, Jesus says, possibly in close connection with the thanksgiving prayer, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear; for verily I say unto you that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things which ye hear and have not heard them."<sup>29</sup> The saying

<sup>27</sup> "Sayings of Jesus," p. 302.

<sup>28</sup> "Sayings of Jesus," p. 253f.

<sup>29</sup> Matthew 13 : 16, 17.

regarding the casting-out of devils by Beelzebub is of similar import. The argument of Jesus is that a divided house must fall. His expulsion of demons by the Spirit of God was proof that that kingdom was come. Then he added words which have the ring of destiny: "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."<sup>80</sup> That is to say, his own person is the criterion for determining the validity of human conduct, its permanent and abiding moral worth.

Again in the words of reply to the demand for a sign we note the same solemn tones, words which are in themselves a judgment of men of the most tremendous import. An evil and adulterous generation seek a sign. The Son of man shall be a sign to that generation only as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites. "The men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment against this generation and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here." In the same connection he asserted that a greater than Solomon is here.<sup>81</sup> Nothing short of utmost violence can rob these words of their momentous import as a declaration of the significance of Jesus for his generation. He is not to be classed with kings or prophets. Kings and prophets, indeed, longed to see and hear the things seen and heard by that generation.

<sup>80</sup> Matthew 12 : 30; Luke 11 : 23.

<sup>81</sup> Matthew 12 : 41; Luke 11 : 32.

The note of judgment pervades a large number of the utterances of Jesus preserved in the Logia: "Wherefore the wisdom of God said: I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them ye will slay and persecute; that there may come upon you all the blood shed upon the earth from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things will come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets and stoneth those that are sent to her! How often would I have gathered her children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you: Ye shall not see me from henceforth until it shall come when ye say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."<sup>22</sup> The last words of this passage are clearly Messianic. Herculean efforts have been made to remove the Messianic sections of the Gospels by all sorts of critical suppositions. There is a school of critics who assume that all the Messianic utterances are the result of the action of the faith of the disciples after the death of Jesus attributing to him words which he never spoke. But as a matter of fact the Logia, this ultimate source of knowledge of what Jesus did say, according to recent criticism, is teeming with Messianic implications and assumptions. In a

<sup>22</sup> Matthew 23 : 37f.; Luke 13 : 34f.

number of instances the Messianic import lies on the surface, as in the closing words of the above passage.

The Messianic character of the Logia appears even more explicitly in the following: "For as the lightning cometh forth from the east and is seen even unto the west, so shall be the coming of the Son of man." Again: "As were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall be the coming of the Son of man."<sup>33</sup> Of like import are the sayings in connection with the return of the Master and the surprise of the unfaithful servant and his expulsion and portion with the hypocrites. Passages like these present insuperable barriers to the current theory that Jesus was not the Christ at all, that he was simply a pious Jew who desired to restore Israel, and who made no assertions which warrant any other supposition. A final citation from the Logia we give which is itself inexplicable save on the assumption of the Messianic import of the message of Jesus: "Ye who follow me shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Matthew 24 : 37f.; Luke 17 : 26f.

<sup>34</sup> Matthew 19 : 28; Luke 22 : 30.

Of course many critics set aside the testimony of the Logia document whenever it exhibits Messianic implications as well as when it contains direct Messianic teachings. The expression "Son of man" employed by Jesus and the other expression found in the Gospels, "the Son of God," as applied to Jesus have been the occasion of a long-drawn controversy. We do not need to enter the controversy. Our purpose does not require it. Certainly the phrase "Son of man" in the passages just cited cannot have any other than a Messianic import as used by the compiler of the Logia. Its presence in the Logia with that import is all we are here concerned in making clear. The fact that some critics ascribe it to the later action of faith and deny that these "Son of man" passages came from the lips of Jesus we do not forget. The relation of that fact to our argument will appear in due time.

Hitherto we have confined our attention to the sayings of Jesus as recorded in the document Q. It is chiefly made up of sayings. Yet it contains a record of a few of the most important of the events of the life of Jesus, or of events with a direct bearing upon his life. The preaching of John the Baptist is recorded, and in connection with it is prophecy of the coming One "mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear," who shall baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.<sup>85</sup> An account is also given of the temptation of Jesus, which

<sup>85</sup> Matthew 3 : 11; Luke 3 : 16.



from beginning to end is freighted with Messianic significance.<sup>36</sup> There is also the record of what is in some respects the most notable miracle of Jesus, the healing of the centurion's servant at a distance, and the remarkable commendation of the Gentile's faith.<sup>37</sup>

In the above outline we have not exhausted the material in Q available for our understanding of the consciousness of Jesus, but we have shown that this source lying in the background of Matthew and Luke is in all essential respects similar in character to the remaining portions of our first and third evangelists. There is no evidence whatever that these common sections which Matthew and Luke may have derived from a preexisting writing of Matthew himself or other writer, contain any alien or discordant elements as compared with the Gospels as a whole. It is no more possible to find the portrait of a merely remarkable Jewish teacher who was the "prince of saints," in no respect transcending "the purely human," in this document than it is possible to find it in the Gospels as a whole. If Matthew and Luke as wholes contain "apocalyptic" and "transcendental" or "Johannine" elements, so does the record contained in the Logia.

It will not be necessary to give any extended outline of the teachings of Mark. These are familiar to the reader. A very condensed refer-

<sup>36</sup> Matthew 4 : 1f.; Luke 4 : 1f.

<sup>37</sup> Matthew 8 : 5f.; Luke 7 : 2f.

ence to a few passages by way of reminder will suffice to indicate the importance and value of the testimony of this second primary source of our knowledge of Jesus. Mark records the baptism of Jesus with the opened heavens and approving voice of the Father;<sup>38</sup> the announcement by Jesus of the coming of the kingdom and his preaching of the gospel;<sup>39</sup> among many miracles the healing of the paralytic and the forgiveness of his sins by Jesus in connection with which he answers the charge of blasphemy;<sup>40</sup> the very remarkable saying about the departure of the bridegroom and the fasting of the disciples;<sup>41</sup> his proclamation of himself as Lord of the Sabbath;<sup>42</sup> the appointment of the Twelve;<sup>43</sup> the saying about binding the strong man and spoiling his house;<sup>44</sup> the raising of the daughter of Jairus from the dead;<sup>45</sup> the feeding of the five thousand;<sup>46</sup> the walking on the sea;<sup>47</sup> the feeding of the four thousand;<sup>48</sup> the memorable confession of Peter and the extended Messianic utterances, including the prophecy of his death and resurrection;<sup>49</sup> in connection with these events the request of the sons of Zebedee for places on his right and left hands and the reply of Jesus;<sup>50</sup> the triumphal entry;<sup>51</sup> the parable of the Vineyard and rejection of the King's Son;<sup>52</sup> the prediction of false messiahs, persecution of disciples, and that

<sup>38</sup> Mark 1 : 9-12.<sup>41</sup> Mark 2 : 20.<sup>44</sup> Mark 3 : 26f.<sup>47</sup> Mark 6 : 49f.<sup>50</sup> Mark 10 : 35f.<sup>39</sup> Mark 1 : 14, 15.<sup>42</sup> Mark 2 : 28.<sup>45</sup> Mark 5 : 35f.<sup>48</sup> Mark 8 : 6f.<sup>52</sup> Mark 11 : 8f.<sup>40</sup> Mark 2 : 6-12.<sup>43</sup> Mark 3 : 14f.<sup>46</sup> Mark 6 : 34f.<sup>49</sup> Mark 8 : 27f.<sup>51</sup> Mark 12 : 1f.

they should be hated of men for his name's sake;<sup>53</sup> prediction of the coming tribulation and the command to watch;<sup>54</sup> the anointing at Bethany;<sup>55</sup> the institution of the Lord's Supper and the remarkable saying as to the shedding of his blood "for many";<sup>56</sup> the Gethsemane agony;<sup>57</sup> the betrayal, crucifixion;<sup>58</sup> the resurrection and appearances to Mary Magdalene, to the two walking in the country, to the Eleven, the giving of the Great Commission, the ascent into heaven, the preaching which followed attended by mighty works.<sup>59</sup>

### 3. JESUS OR CHRIST?

It will be proper at this point to pass in review very briefly a number of the current critical views of the person of Jesus. We select a few only out of a multitude, and these on the principle of illustrating the variety of prevalent conceptions by means of typical examples. The real issue is whether Jesus is to be held simply as Jesus or whether we are also to regard him as Christ the anointed of God and Saviour of the world. Or, stated in other words, it is the question whether the gospel of Jesus is simply his message about God the Father, or whether it also includes his person.

We begin with Doctor Martineau, to whom we have already made frequent references, because of

<sup>53</sup> Mark 13 : 1-13.

<sup>54</sup> Mark 14 : 22f.

<sup>55</sup> Mark 14 : 44 to 15 : 47.

<sup>56</sup> Mark 13 : 14f.

<sup>57</sup> Mark 14 : 32f.

<sup>58</sup> Mark 14 : 3f.

<sup>59</sup> Mark 16 : 1-20.

his views on religious authority. Doctor Martineau's view may be very briefly stated. He recognizes clearly the existence of the Messianic and apocalyptic elements in the Gospels as we have them. But Jesus did not claim to be Messiah. That would have been claiming to be what he was not, and this would be inconsistent with his piety. For Jesus was "the supreme type of moral communion between man and God."<sup>60</sup> He was the "prince of saints." Martineau everywhere employs this conception of Jesus to reconstruct the Gospel history. The moral impression of Jesus upon his disciples was so tremendous that it created the belief in the resurrection, which did not occur; and led them to impute to Jesus the Messianic claim, which he did not make; and to represent him as uttering many sayings in accordance with the Messianic fiction, which were never uttered by him. Martineau runs the keen edge of his knife between the parts of sayings which are indissolubly bound together in the records in order to relieve them of offensive elements. The large plea of Jesus for Sabbatical freedom in the passage in Matthew 12: 1-6 is quite in harmony with Jesus' character. But the sayings in that connection, "One greater than the temple is here," and "the Son of man is lord of the Sabbath," cannot have been spoken by Jesus, because the official and personal implications involved are incompatible with the simple piety of Jesus. So

<sup>60</sup> "Seat of Authority," p. 356.

also Jesus must have uttered the thanksgiving prayer, "I thank thee, O Father," etc.,<sup>61</sup> but he could not have uttered the lofty words as to the mutual and exclusive knowledge of each other between the Son and the Father, nor the words of the great invitation, "Come unto me all ye that labor," etc., in the same context.

Doctor Martineau maintains that the records as we have them are made up of mythological and unhistorical elements combined with some truth. These alien elements were introduced by the writers after Christ's death. The Christianity of the churches has been that created not by Jesus himself, but by the mythology which his followers introduced in the record. Jesus as the object of faith was no part of the teaching of Jesus. Christianity is the personal religion of Jesus.<sup>62</sup>

We note next the view of Professor Wellhausen. Jesus was undoubtedly regarded as Messiah by his followers, and as such was crucified. Only thus can we account for the belief in his Messiahship after the crucifixion.<sup>63</sup> But how Jesus regarded himself with reference to the Messiahship it is difficult to determine. The synoptic records disclose sufficiently the disciples' belief, but not Jesus' own view of the matter. His final confession before the Jews is not "free and spontaneous,"<sup>64</sup> and doubt

<sup>61</sup> Matthew 11 : 25f.; Luke 10 : 21f.

<sup>62</sup> "Seat of Authority," p. 651.

<sup>63</sup> Wellhausen, "Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien," p. 92.

<sup>64</sup> "Frei und unumwunden," p. 92.

lingers as to the occurrence. Jesus may be called the Jewish Restorer, although he renounced all political elements of reform. The best witness for his self-consciousness is the parable of the Sower. He is the teacher who shows the way to God.<sup>65</sup>

Professor Wellhausen also asserts the "Christianizing" tendency in the early church in accordance with which Christ was changed from the human teacher into the divine Saviour and risen Lord. He recognizes clearly, however, the presence of those "Christianizing" and Messianic elements in all the records as we have them. In Mark those elements begin with the narrative of Peter's confession and the predicted death and resurrection. In Matthew and Luke, on the other hand, the Messianic elements pervade the narrative throughout. Even Q, he admits, has them in a large measure, and on this account he holds against Harnack that Mark is older than Q.<sup>66</sup> Wellhausen vigorously opposes those who try to explain away the clear Messianic import of Mark 8:27f., on the theory that this account simply records the foreboding of Jesus as he looked forward to the inevitable. The real Messianic meaning of the passage, he contends, cannot be denied. But it was simply the historic action of the death of Jesus carried back into his

<sup>65</sup> Wellhausen, "Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien," pp. 93, 94.

<sup>66</sup> "Für die Vergleichung ist am Wichtigsten der scheinbar nur äußerliche Unterschied, dass die Quelle, die bei Markus eng eingefasst ist, bei Matthäus und Lukas nach allen Seiten durchsichert. Er genügt zum Beweise der Priorität des Markus, auch vor Q." "Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien," p. 84.

purpose by the writer of Mark.<sup>67</sup> The view of Professor Wellhausen generally stated then, is that the Jesus of the church is not the Jesus of history, although the records which we have clearly exhibit the essential features of the Jesus of the church.

The view of Doctor Martineau and that of Professor Wellhausen, as the reader has doubtless noted, are very similar, though not identical. We note next a somewhat different type of opinion represented by Professors Bousset and Harnack.

Professor Bousset holds that Jesus considered himself to be the Messiah of his people, not because of his reported sayings, which have been critically doubted, but on the certain fact that the belief of the Messiahship existed from the beginning, and its origin is inexplicable without his assertion of it.<sup>68</sup> The post-resurrection belief would be the result of "sheer magic" without some psychological pre-resurrection preparation.<sup>69</sup> The reserve of Jesus in proclaiming the Messiahship was due to the inevitable political complications. Jesus was "super-prophetic" in his consciousness and has no successor. The title "Son of man" is Messianic, and was purposely chosen by Jesus to change the popular Messianic conception of the "Son of David" into a supernatural one in which the Messiah becomes judge, taking God's place.<sup>70</sup> Jesus predicted his return in glory. He almost assumes divine

<sup>67</sup> "*Einleitung*," p. 91.

<sup>68</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 168.

<sup>69</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 169.

<sup>70</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 187.

powers; indeed, Bousset asserts, according to the synoptic account, he does assume them. But it is "inconceivable" that Jesus actually did so. "It is inconceivable that Jesus who stamped the fear of that almighty God who had power to damn body and soul together upon the hearts of his disciples with such marvelous energy, and who could speak of that fear because he shared it to the bottom of his soul, should now have arrogated to himself the Judgeship of the world in the place of God."<sup>71</sup> Thus Jesus never overstepped the limits of the "purely human" or put himself on a level with God. All which transcends the human is the dogmatism of the disciples, not the opinion of Jesus.<sup>72</sup> The belief in the resurrection was the energy behind the victories of the early church, Bousset asserts, but he fails to record a belief in the actual resurrection of Jesus. He rather assumes that the resurrection experiences were subjective with the disciples, though mighty in their action.<sup>73</sup>

Jesus was the leader of the ages and nations to God, the revealer of the Father, the perfect type of manhood and piety, the founder of the kingdom of God.<sup>74</sup> It is very difficult to reconcile the discordant elements in Professor Bousset's conception of Jesus, and in particular to attribute to Jesus as much and no more than the view involves. It is much less self-consistent than that of Martineau and Well-

<sup>71</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 203.

<sup>73</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 210.

<sup>72</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 205.

<sup>74</sup> Bousset, "Jesus," p. 209.



hausen. Bousset accepts some of the apocalyptic elements in the sayings of Jesus as genuine, elements which are so offensive to Doctor Martineau as incompatible with the piety of Jesus. Yet he seeks to account for their presence in the teachings by assuming that Jesus was mistaken.

The view of Professor Harnack is very much like that of Bousset. Jesus desired nothing from men other than that they keep his commandments. The Messianic element runs through the synoptic records. But his person was not a part of the message of Jesus. His "person" and "worth" lay wholly outside of his circle of ideas as a teacher. Eternal life under the eye and in the strength of God was the significance of the message of Jesus. God was his Father and ours. Equipment for service was not his as an inherent energy, but came to him from the Father. There is nothing here transcending the human. This is the simple record of the Gospels. There is nothing to distort or explain away.<sup>75</sup>

The gospel, according to Harnack, was corrupted by the Greek philosophy and took the form of the Logos doctrine. But this, while it has its value, was no unmixed blessing. It led not to the God whom Jesus preached.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> "Ziel, Kraft, Einsicht, Erfolg und das harte Müssen—alles kommt ihm vom Vater. So steht es in den Evangelien; da ist nichts zu drehen und zu deuten." Harnack, "Das Wesen des Christentums," p. 80.

<sup>76</sup> "Das Wesen des Christentums," p. 128.

We have already seen, however, that Doctor Harnack's assertion that there is nothing to "distort" or "explain away" in the record is far from tenable from his own point of view. He himself labors hard to make peace with the words of the great thanksgiving of Jesus, and while admitting that critically the words may stand, concludes finally that they must be rejected because of their "Johannine" character. Numerous other passages of similar import are to be rejected only on similar grounds.

Prof. H. J. Holtzmann proceeds a step farther than Harnack and Bousset. Jesus was Messiah in his own thought and that of his disciples. The conception of the "Son of man" means the bringer in of the kingdom of God. "Son of God" in Jesus' mouth implies his immediate and untrammelled experience of God in his own spirit." "Son of God" and "Son of man," these two together constitute the indivisible unity of the Messianic conception of Jesus, which left behind the Old Testament and Jewish form and assumed a new and spiritual form. The Messiah conception was thus lifted out of the past and projected into the future. Holtzmann thinks the two-nature view of Christ's person as set forth in the Nicene and other symbols has been overcome. But it is as if this doctrine had been fashioned expressly for the purpose of facilitating the combination in the unity of his person of the

"Holtzmann, *Das Messianische Bewusstsein Jesu*," p. 98.

Jewish and human factors of Him who was a Messiah and more than a Messiah, as his forerunner, John, was a prophet and more than a prophet.<sup>78</sup>

Another group of writers, without dogmatic prejudice of the case, realize the difficulties of the middle ground on the question of the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus. If that form of self-consciousness coupled with predictions of a future return in glory is allowed, then the whole structure of the argument against the supernatural and eschatological elements of the synoptic picture begins to totter to its fall. For it rests upon the assumption that all those elements were projected back into the teachings of Jesus by the disciples after his death. Either Jesus was simply the teacher and pious Jew of Martineau and Wellhausen or he was the Jesus of faith. A middle ground here is dangerous, indeed a fatal compromise. Some able writers, seeing this, do not hesitate to choose the latter alternative. Being unable critically to clear the records of the supernatural and eschatological elements they accept the records as substantially correct. We note two of this class of writers.

Professor Kühl has set forth this view in his "*Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu.*" He holds that Jesus was and desired to be recognized as Messiah; that the records abound in proofs of this; that while Mark's general plan seems to exclude Messianic

<sup>78</sup> "*Das Messianische Bewusstsein Jesu,*" p. 100.

notes prior to Peter's confession in chapter 8, nevertheless there are such notes earlier in the Gospels; that beyond all question Jesus conceived the completion of the kingdom of God eschatologically; that it was an act of peculiar greatness in Jesus to assimilate the conception of a suffering Messiah in his Messianic consciousness; that Jesus was impregnably convinced that his sufferings could not but result in his exaltation; that the words at the institution of the Supper show that he understood the saving significance of his death; that the Messianic faith is conceivable in connection with the resurrection of Jesus only if the resurrection is a historical fact.<sup>79</sup>

Prof. James Denney, in his recent work, "Jesus and the Gospel," has subjected the entire New Testament record to a searching investigation and analysis with a view to answering the question whether the actual Jesus of history is to be identified with the Jesus of faith. He finds that the Christ of primitive Christian preaching, of Paul, of the Epistle to the Hebrews, of Peter, of James, is one and the same Christ. He puts the case strongly for the resurrection of Jesus, and then gives an elaborate account of the pertinent elements in the Gospel of Mark and Q. We give Doctor Denney's conclusion in his own words: "The most careful scrutiny of the New Testament discloses no trace of a Chris-

<sup>79</sup> Ernst Kühl, "*Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*," pp. 27, 29, 30, 44, 49, 52, 53, 55, 57, 61-65.

tianity in which Jesus has any other place than that which is assigned him in the faith of the historical church. When the fullest allowance is made for the diversities of intellectual and even of moral interest which prevail in the different writers and the Christian societies which they address, there is one thing in which they are indistinguishable—the attitude of their souls to Christ. They all set him in the same incomparable place. They all acknowledge to him the same immeasurable debt. He determines, as no other does or can, all their relations to God and to each other.”<sup>80</sup> Doctor Denney says the New Testament teaching, when expressed in the form of a belief, may be stated thus: “I believe in God through Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord and Saviour.”<sup>81</sup> This means two things: “First, that the Person concerned is to God what no other can be; and secondly, that he is also what no other can be to man.”<sup>82</sup> Of course men will go on and define further in creedal and theological forms what Jesus Christ is, but Doctor Denney holds that properly understood the above statements contain the essentials of the New Testament teaching.

When it is borne in mind that the conclusions of Professors Kühl and Denney and others who hold similar views are reached after giving most careful attention to all the critical considerations involved; when also we recall the conclusion of men

<sup>80</sup> James Denney, “Jesus and the Gospel,” p. 329.

<sup>81</sup> James Denney, “Jesus and the Gospel,” p. 350.

<sup>82</sup> James Denney, “Jesus and the Gospel,” p. 351.

like Professor Harnack that the source Q is rich in Messianic teachings,<sup>83</sup> and that of Prof. Bernard Weiss and others that there is no proof that the earliest sources were corrupted by later ideas<sup>84</sup> we are impressed with the strength of the claim that the Christ of faith is the same as the Jesus of history.

The situation thus arising is necessarily embarrassing to all who wish to maintain their critical principles and at the same time reject the Jesus of faith. The logical result has followed in the disposition on the part of many to reject the entire New Testament record as untrustworthy. If the utmost effort of critical analysis leaves us the same Jesus we had before, then criticism must condemn the record as a whole. There are many, therefore, who assure us that the effort to find out who and what Jesus was is a hopeless undertaking. Some of these, however, while seeking to invalidate the history attempt philosophically or through the study of comparative religion to validate the doctrine. Professor Pfleiderer presents the view that the fundamental ideas of Christianity are true and necessary for man's religious life, but that they were not derived from an actual incarnation of Jesus. The incarnation idea he derives from a study of comparative religion. He thinks that the disciples in harmony with the general religious tendency of the

<sup>83</sup> "Sayings of Jesus," p. 168.

<sup>84</sup> B. Weiss, "*Die Quellen der Synoptischen Ueberlieferung*," p. 89.

race, incorporated this idea in the story of Jesus. The "leit motiv" of the Christian drama "through death to life" is a universal idea of the race. So far as our evangelical records go, it is a hopeless undertaking to attempt to ascertain from them the real facts of the life of Jesus.<sup>85</sup>

Professor Royce, in an article in "The Harvard Review," holds that the elements which are vital to Christianity are, among other things, the cardinal doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement. Yet he does not think that these are dependent for their validity upon a historical basis. They are essential as factors in man's religious apprehension of reality.<sup>86</sup> A writer in "The Hibbert Journal," in an article entitled *The Collapse of the Liberal Theology*, sets forth a similar view. The simple human Jesus of liberal theology, he shows, has through the efforts of criticism disappeared from the synoptic records where he has been supposed hitherto certainly to be found. He then proceeds to construct a mythical Jesus and a faith in an incarnate and atoning Saviour as necessary to religion, while repudiating the Gospels as records of actual historical events.<sup>87</sup>

#### 4. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS FROM CRITICISM

We are now prepared to ask and answer the question: What conclusion does the present status

<sup>85</sup> Pfeiderer, "The Early Christian Conception of Christ," pp. 10, 33, 154, 158, 160, 162.

<sup>86</sup> "Harvard Review," October, 1909, p. 408f.

<sup>87</sup> Rev. K. C. Anderson, in "Hibbert Journal," January, 1910, p. 301f.

of scientific and historical criticism warrant as to the teaching of the synoptic Gospels concerning the consciousness of Jesus? The answer which is thrust upon us has already been anticipated in the foregoing discussion. Here we summarize more fully and generally.

For one thing scientific criticism clearly warrants the conclusion that the Christ of faith is continuous with the Jesus of the synoptic records. Observe that we do not say continuous with the Christ of history. On this point we shall speak further. Observe also that we do not assert in the above sentence that criticism warrants the conclusion that the Christ of Nicæa and of the historic creeds is continuous with the Christ of the synoptic records. Our effort now is to state with exactitude the situation which has arisen out of the elaborate effort of New Testament criticism. The Jesus of the synoptic records gave himself out as Messiah and founder of the kingdom of God. He offered himself as the supreme and sole revealer of God to man. He presented himself to men not merely as the teacher of the way to God, but as the mediator of religion to man, through whom, by faith in him, man is to fulfil his religious destiny. He announced himself as having authority to forgive sins and as the future Judge of men who should return in glory for the purpose. So far there is scarcely any difference in opinion. So far as such differences exist they are on matters of detail and not



the main points. Martineau, Wellhausen, Bousset, Harnack, and all the others admit the presence of the Messianic and "Johannine" and "apocalyptic" elements in the records. These elements we find not only in Matthew and Luke, as we have them, but in Q, the common source alleged by criticism to be the background of Matthew and Luke. So also are they found in the other primitive source, Mark.

The next question is: What has scientific criticism to say in answer to the question whether the Christ of faith is continuous with the Christ of history? The reply is that scientific criticism has nothing to say on this question except on the basis of the records. If scientific criticism rejects the testimony of the records, then scientific criticism as such has no opinion, and no data for forming an opinion on the question. Critical philosophy has given numerous answers to the question, nearly as many as there are critics disposed to philosophize. Doctor Martineau says all the Messianic and apocalyptic elements were imported or projected into the story from a subsequent date. Wellhausen says the disciples held Jesus as Messiah, while there is no evidence that Jesus himself desired to be so regarded. Wrede says that Jesus did not offer himself as Messiah, nor did the disciples hold him as such, but that this does not settle the question, and Jesus might nevertheless have secretly considered himself to be the Messiah and that all the synoptic

records and sources, so far as we know them, including Q, are rich in Messianic material. Professor Pfleiderer admits the presence of these elements in all the records, but concludes that the records are wholly unreliable. Not the records, but other considerations lead to these views.

We may classify these writers in a twofold manner. All the others agree with Professor Pfleiderer in holding that the records are unreliable in part. They hold, against him, that in part they are trustworthy. The line of cleavage at this point it will be interesting to note. Those who follow the records in part and repudiate them in part proceed in both respects upon the deliverances, not of their scientific and critical, but of their moral consciousness, or upon their philosophic assumptions. There is no scientific evidence against the rejected parts which warrants the rejection. There is no scientific evidence in favor of the accepted parts which is more compelling than the corresponding evidence in favor of the rejected parts. Pfleiderer and his school see clearly that to admit the Messianic and apocalyptic elements at all in our original sources on scientific grounds is to imperil the whole case for the view held by his school. The others whose ethical attachment to Jesus is strong cannot bear to raise questions as to the incomparable moral teachings of Jesus. But in admitting these elements of the record on scientific grounds they allow the validity of a principle which can be used to vindicate the

presence in the record of the other parts which do not appeal to their moral consciousness.

In view of the above it may be asserted that either of two courses is open to the critic. He will pursue a course, which is logically justifiable at least, if with certain presuppositions to begin with, when he finds in the record certain elements incompatible with his presuppositions he rejects those elements; and then, if when he finds that the remaining elements are authenticated no better than the discarded ones, he also rejects these. This course will be self-consistent and logically justifiable provided the presuppositions are correct. At any rate, Pfleiderer has pursued this course. On the other hand, if with some constraining interest of another kind the critic finds elements which he regards as scientifically tenable and which must be retained at all hazards, and then finds also certain elements not on their face so acceptable but scientifically and critically as well authenticated as the other parts—then I say he will be both logically and scientifically justified in retaining the record as a whole. This is the attitude adopted by writers like Professors Denney and Kühl. There is a third course, however, which is not to be justified, either logically or scientifically, and that is to accept some things because they appeal to the moral or philosophic consciousness and reject others because they do not appeal to that consciousness and then proclaim that the rejection took place on scientific grounds. 'And

this becomes one of the gravest of scientific sins when the actual historical documents and critical evidence are as strongly in favor of the rejected as for the accepted parts. Yet this is the course of the group of writers named and many others.

Now I do not wish to overstate the results of critical effort in either direction. But the following statement is warranted: To accept the records in their essential features or to reject them in their essential features would, therefore, seem to be the only self-consistent course in view of the present status of scientific historical criticism. Critical analysis of the sources does not yield the simple human Jesus of Martineau's and Bousset's picture. That Jesus, in other words, has vanished from the New Testament. That such a Jesus cannot be found in the Johannine and Pauline writings has long been known and acknowledged by all schools of thought. And now at length it appears that he cannot be found in the synoptic records.

The objections then to the Christ of faith are not scientific objections arising as the result of the application of the principles of criticism to the phenomena or thought of the evangelical records. The essential factors which constitute the objection to the Jesus of faith are not at all derived from the objective realm to which inductive historical science confines her view. These objections come from a peculiar stage of the human consciousness due to the form which our recent culture has taken. It is

a philosophic world-view, derived from inductive science not yet full grown, turning against the inductive method when applied in a particular way. It is the child trying to devour the mother. For this objection asserts that no amount of historical evidence can establish a particular kind of fact. The facts involved are not only such as belong to the religious view of the world, and the existence of an orderly moral kingdom, and the communication of a divine revelation to man—facts which should predispose us in their favor; but they are also facts which have actually evoked the profoundest "Amen" in all our Western world during two thousand years, and have been the criteria of our on-going civilization. Historical and critical science here so far depart from the humility and docility of all genuine science as to assert a universal negative. Such events as the Gospels narrate could not have occurred in any conceivable sort of a universe. It is not that the Christian view of the world is not self-consistent and, from its own standpoint, tenable, but rather that its standpoint is untenable.

No standpoint is tenable save one, and that asserts the universal negative. It is not that Christian history is not self-consistent regarded as a phenomenon by itself. For Professor Martineau and many others admit and deplore the action of the evangelical conception of the gospel throughout Christian history. That conception is indeed a

myth, but the myth has created the church and Christian civilization. The real Jesus has been lost to history two thousand years. He failed to get his message understood. He is not the cause which has produced the effects we see. The mythology to which his shadowy history gave rise has done that. Not only so. If the Jesus of history had been actually what evangelical Christianity has asserted that he was, then indeed he and not the mythology regarding him would be the real cause behind the Christian history. All the records of his life we have testified that he was just such a Jesus. Now that two thousand years have elapsed millions of Christians regard him exactly as did the New Testament writers. To them and to their experience he is the Light of the world. It would be like a total eclipse to eliminate him from history. Now we are told that all this devotion, all this intense religious conviction, is born of and sustained and nurtured by a myth regarding Jesus, not by Jesus himself.

In view of the situation thus outlined, surely denial can go no farther. The facts, so far as they are accessible to us, are all in, and without exception they all point one way. Nevertheless they point the wrong way, we are confidently assured. This group of literary facts, reenforced by this continuous course of historical facts, and these confirmed by a vast mass of experimental facts, this threefold induction of criticism, of history, and of experience,

is false. It cannot be true, because it clashes with a particular world-view. Under these circumstances there is nothing left to argue about if the methods of science are to be employed. The debate is ended.

It is evident that the opponents of the Christian view have permitted the phenomena and laws of the physical world to determine for them the view of the action of all the forces of the universe. They are not open to the conception which allows to spiritual and personal forces the paramount place in the world. All the highest intelligences must needs work on the lines and under the conditions of the cosmos as we know it. This attitude is as unscientific as that of the Ptolemaic against the Copernican view of the solar system. It is not now the Ptolemaic against the Copernican view of the solar system, but the mechanical against the personal and moral view of the universe. Jesus could not have been Christ, because the Christ cannot be made to harmonize with a closed system of forces operating in obedience to the same laws which we see prevailing in nature to-day. No conception of the relations of God to man can justify such a departure from the natural order. Personality, in God and man, can in no sense supply a key to the unique events alleged in the synoptic records. On this account and not on scientific grounds they are to be rejected as the dreams of fond disciples who idealized Jesus after his departure.

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It is evident that the debate over the question of the Jesus of history and the Jesus of faith has reached a new stage. It is no longer a battle of critical theories, it is a battle of world-views. The new stage which we have reached may be stated as follows: Do the methods and results of inductive science warrant us in holding a philosophic world-view which requires the scientific mediation of all religious truth? Must we, in other words, reject all alleged religious truth as false, which may not be verified in the usual scientific way? Is it possible to transfer the methods of physical science into the personal and religious realm in a manner so thorough-going as to discredit all phenomena of that realm which are not reducible to scientific formulation under the usual categories of law and causation? Or, more generally, is the current world-view derived from the application of the principle of physical continuity applicable in religion, as well as in nature? The question of freedom and authority in religion is intimately bound up with the answer which may be given. We proceed in the next two chapters to consider the function of scientific research and philosophic speculation in relation to religion and religious belief and religious authority.



## CHAPTER III

### THE INTRACTABLE RESIDUES OF SCIENCE

In the long-drawn discussion of the alleged "conflict" between religion and science in modern times there are two things which impress the thoughtful reader. One is the prevailing disposition on all hands to concede the primacy to the scientific method as a means of testing truth. The other is the indeterminate and vague manner in which men conceive the function of science in relation to religion and of religion in relation to science. There is at present a feeling on the part of many that while religion has its own sphere and function which must be recognized, nevertheless somehow, in the end, nothing can permanently endure in religion which does not obtain for itself scientific validation. Men imagine that it is possible to secure such validation for all the enduring elements in Christianity. Assuming that essential Christianity is true, they proceed to the next step and exclude as untrue all those factors of faith which may not be verified in a rigidly scientific manner. As the outcome of this tendency, there has come into existence a class of books dealing with the "essence" of Christianity, such as that of Harnack and others.

In all these efforts the controlling purpose is to find an irreducible minimum in Christianity which is unassailable by the rigorous methods of the best science. The man in the laboratory has to a very large extent dominated the thinking of the theological teacher.

A wholesome reaction to the above tendency has appeared in recent years in the form of the assertion of the independence of religion and the universal religious as distinguished from the intellectual rights of the soul. This assertion has not as yet, however, become sufficiently clear and strong to emancipate and to restore to religion its proper sphere and function in the life and thought of many modern men. It is our purpose in this chapter to indicate somewhat definitely the limitations of science on the religious side.

We wish at the outset to remind the reader of the realities which underlie the religious life of man. Speaking broadly and leaving out of view, for the moment, the specific claims of Christianity, what are the great conceptions or realities, the foundation, so to speak, of the whole religious structure? They are four, viz., the Soul, Freedom, Immortality, God. In the higher forms of religion, most of all in the Christian religion, these are everywhere assumed. In the lower religions they are often obscured in one way or another, but even in these they are, for the most part, implicit if not clearly held. If any one objects to our employment of the

word realities and insists that the Soul, Freedom, Immortality, and God are assumptions of religion rather than demonstrated or demonstrable realities, we make no objection for the present. Our immediate purpose admits of our dealing with them as assumptions only. But even so, as assumptions they are essential to the existence of religion. Without them religion in the higher sense would be impossible, and without them in some sense no religion of any kind would be possible.

Of course it is true that there are forms of religion in which none of these four ideas is very clearly held. Buddhism, for example, is not very distinct in its conception of any of the four. But our contention is not at all invalidated by this fact. In Buddhism and other forms of pantheism there is some sort of equivalent of each of these. The individual essence, whatever it is, and the ultimate essence, whatever it is, and the interaction and relations of the two in time and after time are the factors of religious activity even in Buddhism. Whether, therefore, religion is conceived as involving the interaction of the soul and God in the strict personal sense or in some other, there are involved the ultimate essences or forms of reality which lie beyond the sphere of exact science. So that we may employ the terms we have selected as sufficiently accurate designations for the purposes in view with the understanding that in some forms of religion it is their equivalents rather than these

objects in the personal sense which are to be understood, and with the further understanding that these defective conceptions will prove insufficient when we come to define religion in its true and highest form.

What then is the message and function of modern exact science regarding these fundamental realities or assumptions of religion? Keeping in mind our purpose, which is not exhaustive discussion of any of these four conceptions, but simply to indicate how science deals with them, our answer may be given in comparatively brief compass.

The general ideal of science is so familiar to modern readers that it is scarcely needful to define it at length. We pause long enough, however, to remind ourselves of that ideal. Science assumes the objective existence of a material world, the universality of the law of causation, and the uniformity and permanent validity of the laws of nature. The object of science is "the discovery of the rational order which pervades the universe; the method consists of observation and experiment (which is observation under artificial conditions) for the determination of the facts of nature; of inductive and deductive reasoning for the discovery of their mutual relations and connection. The various branches of physical science differ in the extent to which, at any given moment of their history, observation on the one hand, or ratiocination on the other, is their more obvious feature, but in no other

way; and nothing can be more incorrect than the assumption one sometimes meets with, that physics has one method, chemistry another, and biology a third."<sup>1</sup>

These same principles quoted from T. H. Huxley are carried forward into the realm of psychology and the social sciences so far as the phenomena admit of their application. Mr. Huxley declares that the golden rule of science is that of Descartes: "Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted." Thus Descartes consecrated doubt in the enunciation of the first great commandment of science. "It removed doubt from the seat of penance among the grievous sins to which it has long been condemned, and enthroned it in that high place among the primary duties, which is assigned to it by the scientific consciousness of these latter days."<sup>2</sup>

The task of science then is perfectly distinct and its method is perfectly clear. The uncompromising rigor with which modern science pursues its task by the application of its method is its chief glory. It would be an unspeakable calamity if science were to become vague and confused as to her distinctive mission and should abandon her exacting methods of verifying truth. Certainly religion has no controversy with science at this point. It is only when

<sup>1</sup> T. H. Huxley, in essay, "The Progress of Science," in volume entitled "Methods and Results," p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> "Methods and Results," pp. 169, 170.

science seeks to transcend her own sphere, or religion is tempted beyond her own boundaries that conflict ensues.

Let us now consider the question: What message has science concerning the great conceptions which are in the background of all religion? We begin with the Soul. Does science authorize belief in the existence of a reality which we name the soul? The key to the method of Descartes as well as the starting-point for his philosophy was the data of consciousness. The primary reality for him was thought. It is possible to resolve all the external world into our own subjective experiences. Philosophies, indeed, have been built upon the principle that thought is the sole reality. But, as Descartes urged, the one reality which cannot be denied is our own thought. The data of the individual consciousness are impregnable to any and all skepticism. We must distinguish here, however, between thought and the thinker. The existence of an ego which thinks seems an irresistible conclusion to ordinary common sense from the existence of thought itself. And yet, as will appear, such conclusion is one which can be and has been doubted, and thus is transgressed the "first great commandment" of science. It is not a "proposition the truth of which is so clear and distinct that it cannot be doubted."

From thought as a starting-point Descartes deduced several truths concerning the soul and God,

and restated the argument for God's existence in a cogent form. Yet from the point of view of exact science Descartes' deductions from his datum of thought are untenable. *Cogito, ergo sum*, is his famous dictum. This declaration of Descartes has been repeatedly attacked as being without scientific warrant. "I think, therefore I am." Now science gives its assent to the first statement only, "I think." This is an immediately given fact. Or rather more accurately stated we should say, science would exclude the "I" from the declaration and assert simply that thought exists. The assertion that the "I" exists is not warranted in the scientific sense. It is rather a deduction of the most metaphysical kind. The further assertion that the thought is the product of the "I" which is assumed to exist is equally metaphysical and scientifically unwarranted. Thus modern scientific men, including Professor Huxley, refuse to accept the Cartesian reasoning involved in his celebrated saying except in one particular, viz., the assertion of the existence of thought.<sup>a</sup>

In accordance with the above, physiological psychology of the most advanced and rigidly scientific type confines its observations and assertions to the "stream of consciousness." It observes what goes on in consciousness and makes a record of what it finds. It generalizes the results as far as possible and formulates the general laws of consciousness.

<sup>a</sup> "Methods and Results," p. 177.

It never allows itself, however, to assert on scientific grounds the existence of a soul or ego independent of and behind the phenomena of consciousness. The reasons are first, that such an independent ego is entirely beyond the range of scientific observation and hence unverifiable by any methods now at the command of science; and secondly, because such independent ego is only one of several hypotheses which might be alleged to explain the phenomena of consciousness. Materialism asserts that consciousness is simply a refined sort of matter, while the spiritual philosophies resolve all matter back into thought, but vary in their manner of conceiving this ultimate reality. But here we pass over from the domain of science into that of philosophy, whereas our purpose is to confine our view strictly to the sphere and function of science. The conclusion of the matter is that science as such has no message whatever as to the existence or non-existence of the soul. Professor Huxley has alluded to this as the "consecration" of doubt. From another point of view it might be called the consecration of modesty. It is simply science asserting her own limitations and refusing an enterprise and task for which she is not qualified. She will not be diverted from her own legitimate function into byways where her quest may become fruitless.

Let it be noted before we pass to the next point that this conclusion as to science does not at all prejudice the case of faith or the conclusions of



philosophy. Faith may go on and postulate the soul, and philosophy may deduce it. Science cannot gainsay either the one or the other. It leaves materialism and spiritualism to fight out their battles in the light of the totality of the phenomena of existence as best they may.

What has exact science to say as to the problem of Freedom? It requires little reflection to show that this question is intimately bound up with the question of the existence of the soul. Materialism, of course, excludes freedom; while a theistic or spiritualistic view of the world implies it. The pervading influence of the conception of law has well-nigh destroyed the idea of freedom with many. The logical tendency of science is toward the denial of freedom, for the reason that science everywhere employs causation, which in the mechanical sense is incompatible with the idea of freedom, as the basis of her investigations and assumes its universal validity. This is true of psychology as of all other sciences which deal with the question directly or indirectly. Many psychologists, therefore, are wholly deterministic. They deny the principle of freedom entirely. And yet it is clear that this is unwarranted. For in the first place we think we are conscious that we are free, just as we are conscious that we think. This datum of our consciousness is less easily disentangled from its antecedents than the datum of thought, but it seems to us as really "given" in consciousness as the other.

Science, however, declines to admit that the consciousness of freedom is to be taken at its face value in the same sense in which our consciousness of thought is to be taken. The difference lies in the fact that the question of 'freedom involves the further question of antecedents, while thought does not. Thought, so science urges, is a "phenomenon" within us, a manifestation of our own consciousness, which is so immediate and direct that we can in no sense doubt it, while freedom by its very definition means independence of the chain of causes and effects. So long as we are ignorant of the chain of antecedents and their relation to our free choices we cannot on scientific grounds assert that we are free. On the other hand, we repeat, science is no more warranted in denying freedom than in asserting it.

In the second place, so long as the problem of the soul as an independent entity exists for psychology, so long will the question of the soul's freedom remain an open one. The question cannot be closed against freedom so long as science has no final word as to the soul. Prof. William James, whose brilliant work in psychology has made all of us his debtors, says regarding free will: "The fact is the question of free will is insoluble on strictly psychological grounds. After a certain amount of effort of attention has been given to an idea, it is manifestly impossible to tell whether either more or less of it might have been given or not. To tell that, we should have to ascend to the antecedents of the

effort, and defining them with mathematical exactitude, prove, by laws of which we have not at present even an inkling, that the only amount of sequent effort which could *possibly* comport with them was the precise amount that actually came. Such measurements, whether of psychic or of neural quantities, and such deductive reasonings as this method of proof implies, will surely be forever beyond human reach." Again he says: "For ourselves, we can hand the free-will controversy over to metaphysics. Psychology will surely never grow refined enough to discover, in the case of any individual's decision, a discrepancy between her scientific calculations and the fact." <sup>4</sup>

Here, again, we find exact science passing her question on and renouncing the problem as one with which she has nothing to do. Her researches give rise to the problem, but her methods do not admit of her dealing with it. It lies beyond her frontier.\*

We consider next the question of Immortality. Here again science is helpless to prove or disprove. The belief in a life after death is one of the ineradicable and well-nigh universal convictions of the human soul, and from this men have inferred its existence. The upward course of evolution has been

\* "Psychology," briefer course, pp. 456, 457.

<sup>4</sup> If the reader is interested in the very difficult question of determinism and freedom, among the vast number of discussions of the subject, I refer him to Professor James' essay, "The Dilemma of Determinism," in his volume entitled "The Will to Believe"; also an essay by Professor Schiller, on "Freedom," in his work entitled "Studies in Humanism," p. 391f.; and to the "Elements of Ethics" of Prof. Noah K. Davis, pp. 11, 15, 55; and to Chap. III in a volume entitled "Personal Idealism," by various writers.

alleged as supplying a basis for the hope of immortality because nature seems bent upon producing the highest and most perfect form of life, and it is not likely that nature will end in anti-climax. Again immortality has been argued from memory, which unifies our experiences in a manner which is unaffected by any of the ordinary changes in the body; and from the will, which breaks in upon the current of events and the on-going of the world as if it were a force superior to cosmic changes. In recent years much interest has been created in the subject through the researches of the Society for Psychic Research. Frederic Meyer, in his work "Human Personality and Its Survival of Death," has given an extremely interesting and suggestive discussion. After all these and many other efforts, however, the problem of immortality from the scientific point of view remains unsolved. What the future may disclose of course no one can say. For the present we must be content to admit that there is no scientific demonstration of immortality.

We must not overlook the further fact that materialism has failed to make good its claim. We heard much and read much a few years ago of thought as a "function" of brain. But nothing brought to light so far in psychology or any other scientific pursuit warrants us in identifying matter and thought. They are totally diverse. Thought is in some manner associated with brain in our ordinary experiences, and the word "function" may be

a proper one to describe their relations. But as Professor James has shown in his lecture on Immortality, there are three possible forms of "function" which may describe the relation of brain and thought—releasing function, transmissive function, and productive function. Conceivably, in other words, brain might release thought, transmit thought, or produce thought. In the last case only would materialism be true.

It is obvious from the foregoing that exact science has no message whatever on the subject of immortality. It is compelled as in the previous instances to refer the matter of immortality to religion and philosophy, and therewith to admit its own inability by any methods devised hitherto to provide an adequate answer of the question.

We ask now what has exact science to say regarding the greatest of all subjects, and the fundamental assumption of religion, the existence of God? We are all familiar with the modern effort to discredit the traditional arguments for God's existence. They do not convince the scientific mind so long as it demands scientific forms of proof. The teleological and cosmological forms of the argument are grounded ultimately in the belief in personality, i. e., the existence of an independent, free, and spiritual self in man, from which we derive the ideas of causation and purpose. This at least is our primary source for these conceptions, however we may apply them in our theistic reason-

ing. So long, therefore, as exact science fails to work its way back to the soul or self behind the thought which manifests itself in consciousness, it cannot accept as conclusive a form of reasoning based upon the existence of the soul. But, besides this, science takes note of the fact that theism is simply one world-view among many. And so long as men can find theoretical justification for a multiplicity of world-views, exact science as such will not take sides in the controversy.

And this suggests what lies at the basis of the scientific attitude, viz., the fact that the question of theism lies outside the province of exact science. Science deals with phenomena, with those manifestations of the universe whose movements may be observed and whose laws may be formulated. Science, therefore, has no bias against theism, indeed many of her ablest votaries are devout believers. But her function is wisely and strictly limited. All that has been said will become doubly clear if we reflect that science applies the principle of causation, so to speak, horizontally rather than vertically. She seeks causes on the same plane with effects. The effect lies in the sphere of phenomena. The causes belong to the same order. Religion deals with causes which are above phenomena. Its causes produce effects in consciousness, but are alleged to lie above or below consciousness on another plane. One fundamental question, as we shall see, is whether the scientific conception of causation necessarily

excludes the religious conception. But meantime the limited function of science is sufficiently clear.

The writer does not anticipate any serious questioning of the preceding contents of this chapter by any of his readers. And yet the import of what has been said may seem startling to those who have so industriously sought to test all religious claims by scientific standards. The conceptions of the Soul, Freedom, Immortality, and God are the intractable residues of science. That is to say, they resist all the efforts of exact science to deal with them. Science is compelled to abandon them altogether and acknowledge her own incompetency.

And yet it is these four realities or assumptions which constitute the foundation of religion. Religion begins, therefore, exactly where science ends. Religion has to do with a group of objects which never come within the range of the scientific vision at all.

The conclusion from the above is sufficiently obvious. It is that, fundamentally, religion never can hope for scientific validation and justification unless science shall change her present methods, or add to them new methods of discovering truth, and in particular shall admit a criterion of truth and explanation other than physical causation. If it be granted, as it is now quite generally granted, that religion is a legitimate and necessary form of human activity, that its right to exist and its supreme value for men is not to be called in question, then its

validation and vindication must rest on other than scientific grounds. If it is conceded that religion rests upon reality, then there must be some methods of apprehending reality other than scientific methods. What those methods are we propose to consider farther on.

It is not proper to attempt extended exposition of the relations of science and religion until we have defined the nature of religion. Meantime we limit ourselves to one or two general statements. One statement is this: Science is competent to deal with the phenomenal aspects of religion, but not with its foundation or essence. Religious practices and ceremonies and forms which may be observed and classified are proper subjects of scientific research. Science may compare religion with religion, the false with the true, the lower with the higher, and learn valuable lessons. In all the manifestations of religion science may ply her calling, but beyond these her credentials do not warrant her proceeding. She abandons the rôle of exact science at once when she does so.

Is it a proper function of science to criticise religion? This question also can be answered more satisfactorily when we have considered the nature of religion. There are, no doubt, senses in which scientific criticism of religion is warranted, but this function of science must be limited to the sphere of religious phenomena. If science sits in judgment on the religious realities behind the manifestations,



then she has passed over from the scientific to the philosophic sphere, or to the sphere of faith. She is no longer true to her calling; she can no longer be called exact science.

The truth we are now considering is of the utmost importance at the present time. Its recognition is absolutely necessary if we are ever to clear the atmosphere of vagueness and confusion. To religious men whose spiritual life is the supreme experience, the scientific procedure which endeavors to weave religious experience and physical science into a continuous fabric is an impossible undertaking. These men cherish a group of realities, or objects, or "values," which by virtue of his own self-imposed limitations the scientific man excludes from the range of objects which he investigates, and concerning which, therefore, he can have no scientific opinion.

I do not forget that many who disparage miracles and the supernatural, and who yet cling to religion in some sense seek, perhaps unconsciously sometimes, to smuggle into their world-view the values for which religion stands. These are held, however, as belonging so completely to the inward life of the soul, as being so hidden and limited in range and so intimately personal that they cease to be an inconvenience in conducting negotiations with science. Certainly the writer rejoices with them in all the comfort they may derive from such a view, but he thinks it is not self-consistent. Either we

live in a personal universe or we do not. The religious world-view is that we do live in such a universe. The possibility of miracle is simply a corollary of this conception of the world, against which science has not even a syllable to utter. The right to believe in the possibility of miracles and the supernatural is, therefore, a religious right. This, of course, does not settle the question of fact as to miracles. The question of fact has been presented briefly by the writer elsewhere and is not under discussion here.\*

Our conclusion, therefore, is that the current mode of expounding the relations between science and religion is incorrect. It confuses the two spheres in an unwarranted manner. If religion has a right to exist, if the underlying assumptions of religion are tenable at all, then we are warranted in working out in a consistent manner the contents of religion, just as with its own assumptions scientific men may unfold the contents of science. This can be done without prejudice either to religion or science, indeed they may become fellow helpers to the truth.

We are not here troubled at all with a possible objection which may lurk in the scientific mind as to the cogency and convincingness of truth in the religious sphere as compared with the inductions of exact science. We shall attempt to show at a later stage that there are other ways of apprehending

\* See "Why is Christianity True?" p. 170f., by E. Y. Mullins.

reality than the scientific way. And however brilliant and splendid the achievements of exact science, these need not be held as in any degree dimming the glories of religion.

Before closing this chapter perhaps we should add a few words as to the tendency of some scientific men to adopt the speculative method beyond the lawful limits of hypothesis in dealing with ultimate problems in defiance of the limitations of science. The note of warning is being sounded by those who most appreciate the real strength and value of exact science and who deplore the disposition to merge science in metaphysics. A recent writer in "The Hibbert Journal," discussing the extremes to which this sort of pseudo-scientific speculation may proceed, indicates quite clearly the danger to science. He says: "Such confusion of thought and dissolution of the boundaries between fact and fancy is deplorable, and if they create trouble in the minds of scientific men, they have absolutely bewildered the general public. Books of a popular nature are constantly appearing which change the result of speculation into established fact, and their readers naturally credit the most astounding statements. The day may come when a new war will arise between science and religion on the issue that the hypotheses of science are too metaphysical to be of value."

Again he says, referring to the effort of great men of science to unite all the phenomena of physics

in a few general laws and to explain their cause by the aid of the atomic theory: "They have spent upon the problem infinite thought and pains, and in the end we have a body of laws firmly established on experimental evidence, but the causes of these laws are as hopelessly obscure as ever. The atom has failed to satisfy the requirements, and now the corpuscle is added to explain new facts, hypothesis on hypothesis. As our knowledge increases, who can doubt but that these, in their turn, will give place to others still more complex, if the same method is pursued, until the succession of atoms and subatoms will make the whole atomistic ideal an absurdity?"

"Just as we have, after centuries of incessant controversy, been forced to accept the fact that we cannot by reasoning from our consciousness obtain an objective knowledge of natural causes, so we must come to realize that reasoning from experimental evidence is subject to exactly the same limitations. Science, in other words, like philosophy, has no ontological value. Should not the men of science clearly recognize this fact and confine their efforts to the legitimate function of science—the discovery of natural phenomena and their classification into general laws derived by logical mathematical processes?"<sup>1</sup>

If the above remarks of Professor More apply to the tendency of science to unlawful speculation

<sup>1</sup> Prof. L. T. More, in "Hibbert Journal," July, 1909, pp. 880, 881.

concerning the objective world with which science herself deals, how much more pertinent and applicable are they to the scientific tendency to dogmatize about the objective world of religion which lies in an altogether extra-scientific sphere.

We have attempted in the foregoing to define the function and limitations of science quite broadly and generally, and we have had in view physical science. There is more to be said as to how far religion and theology may or may not be made scientific. We shall have occasion to discuss this point particularly in connection with our exposition of the nature of religion. References will be made to it in other contexts as well. We shall see that the one distinctive and vital point which differentiates science from religion is the principle of causation conceived as continuity, or the transformation of energy.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE UNSTABLE EQUILIBRIUM OF PHILOSOPHY

Our subject requires a brief outline of modern philosophic movements. Religious life and philosophic thought of course are closely related. But they are not related in the manner assumed by many. Philosophy, as a matter of fact does not supply the basis of religion. Religion antedates the rational explanation of religion. As the sunshine breaks up the slumbering potencies of planted seeds into all the variety and beauty of a profuse vegetation, so religion awakens art and thought and the various activities of culture in the human spirit. Religion is a life-adjustment which creates social systems and civilizations. Philosophy is the rational attempt whose task in part at least is to explain the forces in the background which produce these results. But the rational interest of man is not identical with the religious interest. The desire to know the meaning of the world must never be confounded with the craving for the power necessary to live in conformity with a lofty ideal. We propose now to discriminate these two parallel movements, the desire for explanation and the desire for redemption, religion and the philosophy of religion.

To this end we select a group of representative modern philosophers who present the philosophy of religion in its varied forms. Of course our treatment must needs be very brief, and can deal only with the central and significant aspects of the view of each writer.

### I. CRITICAL MONISM

First we consider the critical monism of Prof. H. Höfding. This is set forth with clearness in his work "The Problems of Philosophy," and his more extended discussion in the "Philosophy of Religion." Professor Höfding describes his philosophy as critical monism. It is monistic, because it seeks a single principle whereby all the facts of being may be explained. It is critical since, as Professor Höfding admits, there are numerous breaches in the continuity of the world.<sup>1</sup>

The word continuity suggests Professor Höfding's principle of explanation. It is the scientific way of explaining facts. An event is explained when we find its meaning in events already known to us. We pass over to the unknown on a bridge thrown across the chasm from the side of the known. We explain a thing only when we see in the effect the transformed cause.<sup>2</sup> True explanation, scientific explanation, is always thus horizontal, not vertical. Theological explanation is

<sup>1</sup> "Problems of Philosophy," pp. 8, 26, 33, 37, 39, 85, 136f.

<sup>2</sup> "Philosophy of Religion," p. 21.

vertical, and explains nothing at all, or everything equally and in the same way. Hence, in Professor Höfding's view, the older arguments for God's existence based on causation and design are without value, since they are forms of explanation which ignore continuity and the scientific principle of explanation.

Professor Höfding recognizes discontinuities, however, in abundance. Continuity is broken as between organic and inorganic, and between sentient and insentient forms of life. In human consciousness again it is broken. When we sleep consciousness is discontinuous, and each of us has a consciousness discontinuous with other consciousnesses. There are other discontinuities mentioned by Professor Höfding, but we need not discuss them here.

In adopting the scientific principle of continuity or the transformation of energy as the basis of his world-view Professor Höfding simply does a thing which is necessary in any and all forms of philosophy. Every general world-view selects some one phase of being, some one unifying principle to explain all the remainder. World-views are, after all, art constructions rather than scientific demonstrations.<sup>3</sup> No possible world-view can be final since there are always other principles of explanation apart from that of any particular world-view. Moreover, it is impossible to explain the world as

<sup>3</sup> "Problems of Philosophy," p. 127.



a whole by any single aspect of the world. World-views therefore all remain unfinished just as the world itself remains unfinished.<sup>4</sup>

Continuity as employed by science, Professor Höfding holds, is a principle taken ultimately from consciousness. It is much like the principle of rationality. When we reason correctly the conclusion never has in it more than was contained in the premises. Physical causation is much like this, save that the time element enters in the physical events and seems to change the nature of the process.<sup>5</sup> Here arises the issue as to idealism, which Professor Höfding does not discuss. He does hold, however, that consciousness supplies us with the idea of continuity which science takes over into nature.

As to religion, Professor Höfding says its essence consists in the "conservation of value." He denies that the idea of the "soul" or even of personality is an established truth. Of course this denial applies to the personality of God as well as of man. Höfding is frankly a pantheist in the sense that he denies personality to God, unless by poetic license.<sup>6</sup> Of course he cannot admit immortality, and rather scouts the idea that the future existence of any individual soul can be of any particular importance to scientific thought. Professor Höfding shrinks from any decisive conclusion as

<sup>4</sup> "Problems of Philosophy," pp. 114-152.

<sup>5</sup> "Problems of Philosophy," p. 60f.

<sup>6</sup> "Philosophy of Religion," p. 87f.

to the ultimate meaning of religion. All his main positions lead logically to the cancelation of the more important meanings men have always attached to religion.

We can reply but briefly to Professor Höfding. The first point against his view is that his fundamental principle of continuity is an abstraction rather than an empirically given fact. He takes it from consciousness, but cuts it away from its context in consciousness, where it is combined with will and all the manifestations of personality. This proceeding on the part of Höfding is scientifically unwarranted. Again Professor Höfding is illogical in his use of the idea of personality. The "conservation of value" has no meaning apart from the idea of personality. Yet he holds to the "conservation of value" while refusing to admit the validity of the conception of personality.<sup>7</sup> No value can be a value to any other than a personal being, so far as our knowledge goes. To assert the conservation of value, therefore, in an impersonal universe is a meaningless assertion.

Professor Höfding is thus pulled violently in two directions. Continuity is necessary in his scheme of thought to explain the interconnection of events in the cosmos. Personality is required on the other hand to give any meaning whatever to the conservation of value. Höfding frankly permits the personal side of his teaching, and therewith his

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

"values," to succumb to the principle of continuity. We are not surprised, therefore, in the end, that he declares himself satisfied with the prospect of the ultimate disappearance of what we now know as religion.

No clearer or more typical example of the logical outcome of the application of the scientific principle of continuity to the philosophy of religion could well be found than that of Professor Höfding. We have cited it because of its value in this respect. The affinities of Professor Höfding's critical monism with the subjective view of religious authority are obvious. In an impersonal world all forms of thought and consciousness are equally valid, equally true, equally authoritative. The idea of a valid, authoritative source of religious truth in such a world is inconceivable.

## 2. IDEALISM

We glance next at Prof. Edward Caird's idealism. This is set forth in his work entitled "The Evolution of Religion." Professor Caird assumes the unity of mankind and the universality of religion. He defines religion not by its earliest forms, but by means of a common principle found in all forms, later as well as earlier.

Psychology supplies the starting-point. 'As rational beings, Caird says, our conscious life is made up of three elements: First, the idea of the object, the not-self, or the world; secondly, the idea of the

subject, or self; thirdly, the idea of the unity which is presupposed in the difference of the self and not-self. There must be such a unity, else the *not-self and self* could not be related to each other. This underlying unity which binds together subject and object is the infinite which embraces and connects all finite things.<sup>8</sup>

To know is to do two things, to distinguish and to relate. Thus to discriminate the tide from other things and likewise the moon, and then to relate moon and tide, this is knowledge. Religion, in Caird's view, is unfolded from lower to higher forms through this progressive knowledge of the self, the world, and the underlying unity which is God. In lower religions the unifying principle, or God, is an object external to man, a fetish or object of nature. In the next stage the perceiving subject or human spirit supplies the idea of the God which is worshiped. He becomes a person as in Jewish monotheism. In the highest stage God is neither like the subject nor object, but is the unifying bond behind or beneath both. Religion evolves continually, and in the evolution opposites, contradictions, antitheses, are reconciled. Christianity is the crown of religion, and "dying to live" is its fundamental law as taught by Jesus.<sup>9</sup>

Professor Caird thinks of matter and spirit as forms of manifestation of a single spiritual prin-

<sup>8</sup> "Evolution of Religion," Vol. I, pp. 64, 107f.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 195, 169f., 172f., Vol. II, pp. 83f., 295f.

ciple. With him the thought process is the fundamental fact of the world and is the principle of all movement, all life, all being. He is monistic and pantheistic; indeed, he goes farther and declares that the true theory of religion must combine monotheism and pantheism.<sup>10</sup>

Like Höfding, Professor Caird works with the principle of rationality as the basal fact of existence. Höfding, however, presses it over into the service of science transformed into continuity in the physical sense; while Caird is chiefly concerned with its use as the key to man's religious life. Both alike, however, use it in an abstract form severed from its place *in consciousness* and in concrete human experience. It is like taking a wing by itself to explain the mechanism of flight. The body to which the wing is attached is a necessary part of the explanation of flight. Nature presents not detached wings, but winged bodies. Rationality is found not adrift by itself in the world, but only as a part of a larger unity. Caird fails to show that matter and mind are manifestations of a single spiritual principle. He assumes it. Things are not identical because they are related. The differences are as marked as the identities of things. Mind and matter are radically unlike, although of course sustaining important relations to each other. The world is not an organism save in a figurative sense. Caird is especially fond of the physical organism

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Vol. II, Lectures 3, 4.

as the symbol of the evolution of religion. He thus tends constantly to reduce the movement to the physical level. Individual centers and wills are the outstanding fact in the social movements of men, not the dominance of a biological law as in an organism. Professor Caird has no difficulty in preserving pantheism in his system of thought, but he scarcely provides for an adequate monotheism. The universe is not level like a tranquil sea. There are geysers of personality shooting up above the surface through some Power behind the visible and tangible. By no kind of known process may these centers of consciousness be made identical with the physical transformation of energy or with the logical processes of the reason.

### 3. PERSONALISM

The late Prof. Borden P. Bowne, in his work entitled "Personalism," comes much closer to the facts of experience in his general view than Höfding or Caird. Philosophy must keep close to the facts of life and experience or else float away from the world like a cloud. We have no instance of Höfding's or Caird's principle save in personality. Bowne sees this clearly. He sets out by assuming personal life and personal relations among men, and argues powerfully to prove that all the contradictions of thought are reconciled in personality. He thus keeps his feet resting on the solid rock of fact. Physical continuity, he holds, really explains

nothing. Causation in nature is an endless regress, like a row of bricks falling against each other. The physical force *a* melts into *b*, and *b* into *c*, and so on—not to the end of the alphabet, for this alphabet has no terminus in the physical series. The only initial cause we know is will as included in personality. Rationality he admits of course as an aspect of personal life, but only as an aspect.

As Professor Bowne starts with personality, so also he ends with it. God is a person. Being as a whole is personal. Only thus can it be made intelligible. Personality is the only engine which is adequate to keep the world going. Professor Bowne, however, does not place God outside of the world. He is not a mere engineer in charge of a machine. God and the world are one, not in the pantheistic sense of an impersonal monism like that of Höfding, nor in the rationalistic sense like the view of Caird. Reality is one as a person.<sup>11</sup>

Philosophy is the search for an intellectual string, so to speak, long enough to tie up all the facts of existence in one bundle. Personality is surely the longest and strongest string yet found. It is the highest and richest thing we know. Our own personality is a known fact. There is no ground for supposing therefore that it will be reabsorbed in something higher and thus canceled. Personalism finds it, values it, and leaves it. From it the supreme Person, God, is deduced.

<sup>11</sup> "Personalism," pp. 54, 57f., 83f., 170f., 202f., 281f., 300f.

Of course, like all monisms, Professor Bowne's fails to bridge the gulf separating mind and matter. Like all general world-views, it uses a part to explain the whole, but it takes the highest part, and the only part containing in itself the various principles of explanation. Like a lens, it focalizes these principles in one intense point of light. You seek in vain for any real and fundamental unity in plurality in nature, but you get a real unity combined with plurality of activity and experience in personal consciousness. So also with the other contradictions of thought. The parts lie scattered like stones for an edifice until personalism combines them into a living unity. Personalism, then is a philosophy with a real climax. Philosophies which explain by means of any lower principle all end in an anti-climax. They begin by an effort to construct and end by dismantling and wrecking the fabric of being. The universe is a universe of persons, not of things. Life is a fellowship of persons, not a play of blind forces, nor merely a logical or biological process. Monistic systems like those of Höfding and Caird, feeling the force of the appeal to personality as the key to a knowledge of the universe, usually provide for some principle higher than personality which shall embrace the values of personality. But such a "higher" principle is an abstraction. There is no basis for it in any facts known to us.

In his volume "Creative Evolution" and related



writings Professor Bergson presents yet another form of monism. He rejects physical continuity and rationality as the key to the meaning of the world. With him instinct or *vital impetus* is the ultimate fact. 'A stream of life flows through the universe and ramifies in various directions like the tide flowing into bays and inlets along the shore, or like the fingers pushing out into the fingers of a glove. 'All forms of life are the outcome of this vital flow or impulse. He argues to prove that matter is a sort of by-product of this vital energy and that reason in man results from his instinctive reaction against matter; that logic, in other words, is a copy in man of the mechanical world outside of man. Bergson makes instinct primary and reason secondary, however, in his general view. Instinct is the real genius of the universe, achieving far more than is possible to reason. It gathers energy as it moves, all the momentum of the past being concentrated in each present act. It is split up into various streams, like the wind blowing against the corners of a house, or like a current of water split into divergent channels. All forms of life from the lowest to the highest arise thus from the original impetus. Professor Bergson denies purpose to this creative energy. Some of his advocates, however, claim that his views are out of harmony with the idea of purpose only in a lower and secondary sense. For our present purpose it is not necessary to discuss the point at all, as our conclusion will show.

We merely cite Professor Bergson's view as one of the most recent forms of monistic philosophy. His effort to "generate" matter from mind does not succeed. But it marks a new method. Idealistic monism usually seeks to show the identity of matter, in principle at least, with consciousness or reason. Bergson rejects mechanism as the fundamental fact, and in this he is right. 'A higher principle is necessary to explain the world.

#### 4. PLURALISM

Thus it appears that monism is a very prevailing fashion in philosophy. We have not even mentioned a number of varieties of it which have greater or less acceptance. There is an opposing camp, however, that questions whether the monistic passion is a wise one. In it are the pluralists. The late Prof. William James' volume, "A Pluralistic Universe," presents an interesting form of pluralism. I give his point of view in general terms only, space forbidding the discussion of details. The pluralist admits the unity of the world, but he is more impressed with its plurality. 'As Professor James puts it, the "allness" of things appeals to the monist while the "eachness" of things appeals to the plurist. Things are many even more impressively and radically than they are one. Some things are apart from other things, and so far as science has learned, they must stay apart.

The blossoms on the stalk of Being are unlike each

other, radically unlike—too much so indeed to be explained as the outflow of a single vital principle. For instance, good and evil, truth and error, mind and matter, freedom and mechanism, personality and physical energy do not, as opposites, coalesce anywhere in our knowledge or experience into identical things. Philosophy never finds any means of gathering all these together, like the beads on a string, save by constructing an imaginary string. It never finds actually any bond of unity such as monism claims. Monism cannot endure contradictions. Pluralism says we must endure them if they exist. Hegel, and in a derivative way later idealists, assert that evil and error and other troublesome things are negative and will gradually be canceled in the on-going of the world. The pluralist replies that this cancels morality and personality, which are facts to be reckoned with, not illusions to be explained away. The thorough-going monists, like Hegel, assert that all things are parts of God, ignorance and error, as well as other things. The pluralist replies that this makes God omniscient and ignorant, holy and sinful at one and the same time.

Professor James assumes a sort of pan-psychic substratum of things, a basal unity or element in which all things float like buoyant objects in the sea. But he puts very special stress on the apartness and mobility of these floating objects, their independence of each other. Hence freedom and will and

responsibility are permanent things, ineffaceable facts of life. And there is no ground for believing they will pass away through any dynamic process of the universe as a whole. God and man are over against each other. They may commune with each other. Professor James clearly recognizes the supernatural in Christian experience, and indeed explains the fact of regeneration itself in terms which are quite in harmony with those of the Pauline epistles. The God he finds is not infinite in the older sense of that word, but he is a God which Professor James thinks is closely akin to the God of Christian theism. Few men in modern times have equaled Professor James in judicial breadth of view and fair-mindedness. Pluralism of course has its own inherent difficulties. The monist insists that unity of thought and being is the goal of all thinking and that a disconnected universe, like that of James, does not satisfy the reason. The pluralist in his turn rings the bell of warning against frail bridges of speculation built across the chasms of the world, and insists that it is wiser to stay the feet from premature attempts to cross upon them. The interests of life are, after all, paramount to those of the reason alone, and the pluralist would wisely protect these.<sup>12</sup>

We might go on outlining philosophic systems if it were necessary. They have increased in number, variety, and impressiveness, along with human

<sup>12</sup> "Pluralistic Universe," pp. 37f., 291, 298f., 186, 325, 318, 321.

genius and insight. The universe is like a mighty jewel with innumerable facets. Each philosopher has seen one of these and explained all the others by it. Each system is impregnable from the point of view of its leading assumption. To refute a particular philosophy one needs only to start with some other assumption. Of course the systems are not all equally strong in proofs assembled in support of their respective assumptions. But there is no compelling logic in any one of them. As logical processes all the leading philosophies are equally respectable. The individual is convinced by the particular system which appeals to him. Thus the rational process, applied to the task of explaining the world, is inconclusive. So long as there is more than one view the clash of systems will continue, and there is no principle on which any one system can read the others out of court. The reason is kaleidoscopic in its preferences and changes. It is inherently in unstable equilibrium, like the waves of the sea.

The result is inevitable. Men weary of an inconclusive rationalism, as a squirrel must weary of a rotating cage. There is action in plenty, but no arrival anywhere, no freedom of movement. Men have repeatedly asked the question whether we are doomed forever to the rotating cage of rationalism. Is there no escape? Two answers have been given. One is that of agnosticism. We cannot know the ultimate meaning of the world, it

asserts. The key to the mystery of being is hopelessly lost. The wise thing and the only wise thing for men under the circumstances is to forego the search for the lost key. Science discovers truth and formulates it. Truth is to be found only in physical research. Here alone is there fruitful effort. Metaphysics, as one has said, is a search of a blind man in a dark room for a black cat which is not there. And yet agnosticism does not satisfy men generally. There is that within us which storms the gates of the unknown with undying energy.

#### 5. PRAGMATISM

The other answer to the question is that of pragmatism. Pragmatism offers denials and assertions, both of which are significant. It denies first that you can explain the world by any abstract principle, by any single aspect of being, such as continuity, rationality, and so on. It denies further that we have any right to explain away any part of the world in order to set up some other part as the key to the true meaning of the whole. Lotze, for example, argued that because things act and react upon each other they must in the last analysis be identical with each other. Pragmatism says things do act and react upon each other, but things are not identical. Both facts must remain. The one must not be sponged from the slate in order to emphasize the other. Pragmatism goes to the

roots of knowledge also by denying that there is such a thing as "pure thought," or pure logic. The error of philosophy has been in assuming such "pure thought." The will enters into all our knowing processes.

Here pragmatism begins its assertions. First, the truth of an assertion depends on its application; secondly, all mental life is purposive; thirdly, pragmatism is a systematic protest against all ignoring of the purposiveness of actual knowing; fourthly, all logic which ignores purpose or will is false or misleading. Thus pragmatism leads directly to a voluntaristic metaphysic; that is a metaphysic which does not seek exhaustive explanations through "pure reason," which has no existence, but by taking account of will as an element in all knowing.<sup>18</sup>

Pragmatism, then, asserts that we can escape from the rotating cage of rationalism provided we are willing to let our whole nature, our total experience, speak to us and not merely an abstract reason; and provided further we permit the whole of the external world to speak to us and not abstract an infinitesimal part of it as the exhaustive principle of explanation. That which is workable in our life-experiences will in the end prove to be true, pragmatism asserts. All world-views are to be treated with equal respect according to pragmatism.

<sup>18</sup> "Pragmatism," by W. James, pp. 56f., 61f.; "Humanism," by F. C. S. Schiller, pp. 12, 13, and Preface, p. xxi.

They are to be regarded as working theories, which must be tried out in actual human experience. Life then becomes the test of the truth of all theories and not the speculative reason alone. True knowledge thus arises from actual experience. Truths become known to us by a process of verification covering many and varied forms of experience. Our axioms even are the result of such life-experiences and life-adjustments. The body of truth grows with the life-process itself. As will appear in the sequel this last-named fact, the rise of truth through life-adjustments, is fundamental for the doctrine of authority in religion.

Pragmatism claims to be a method rather than a philosophy. As such it has its own inconsistencies, its own problems and difficulties. These we pass by in order to accentuate its central truth, viz., the will as a factor in all knowledge. Here pragmatism has the closest kind of affinity for religion. "He that willeth to do shall know," is the fundamental Christian definition of knowledge as announced by Jesus. Pragmatism singles out this principle as of the very core and essence of all knowing.

The will is central in religion. Submission of the human will to God's will is of the essence of religion. Thus pragmatism cannot consistently become a philosophy at all without the experiential knowledge of religion. If we cannot know, save as the will enters into experience, then to know the ultimate meaning of the world we must test that meaning by a



voluntary act by relating our wills to the universe. It is this test when honestly made which produces the impregnable conviction of the truth of religion in men's hearts. Within that world of Christian experience man meets a personal God through Christ. A distinct and definite type of experience and of knowledge arises. Through this interaction of God and man in religious fellowship the Scriptures come into being. The sort of authority possessed by them we shall discuss in a later chapter. Here we simply call attention to the inconclusiveness and non-finality, the unstable equilibrium of philosophy when conducted as a process of the "pure reason," and to the rich and fruitful outcome when man's total nature, his will and emotions as well as his intellect, enter into the knowing process.

We saw in the preceding chapter how science fails to yield the realities and forms of truth required by religion. We have also seen that rationalism is an inherently inconclusive and unstable attitude of mind. Hence it also fails to supply the needed foundation for religion. This is because religion cannot subsist upon postulates and assumptions merely. These are inadequate for its needs. Nor can we ground religion in mere feeling. Religion, in other words, must be grounded in truth. It must be seen to be a form of truth if it is to grip men powerfully and permanently. We commit ourselves fully and strongly to this view. Unless

religion is truth or leads to truth in the ultimate outcome it will not permanently endure. If, on the other hand, it does yield truth to man in his quest for God the principle of authority inevitably arises in the development of man's religious life.

## CHAPTER V

### VOLUNTARISM AND AUTHORITY, OR THE RELIGIOUS ASSIMILATION OF TRUTH

We now pass from the critical to the more constructive side of our task. We must note a little more fully a few things implied or expressed in the preceding pages in order to a clear understanding of one very important phase of our subject. We have accepted the principle that the will is active in all our knowing. Our entire nature in fact passes through the experience when we know a thing most deeply and truly. This is the new principle which modern philosophy and science are recognizing. It has a very vital part to play in religious knowledge. Those who insist that the seat of religious authority is within man's soul, it will be recalled, insist always that we must assimilate, or inwardly digest, every truth of religion before we accept it. On our own part we gladly admit that the assimilation of truth is necessary in religion, but we deny that all religious truth should be rejected until it is assimilated, and hold rather that some religious truths must be assimilated gradually. Indeed, one of the best ways to assimilate some truths is to act upon them. This is particu-

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larly the case with some truths regarding Jesus Christ and his place in our own Christian faith.

But we dissent further from those who insist upon the inward assimilation or mental digestion of all religious truth prior to its acceptance on a still more important ground. We object to their definition of "assimilation" and to their definition of "truth." If the will enters into our knowing processes, then we must revise our notions of what is true and of what we may assimilate. There is much confusion at this point. When men insist upon our rejecting all that is commended to us as truth until we mentally assimilate it they usually have in mind the scientific forms of truth and assimilation. We have seen that in physical science continuity or the transformation of energy is the leading method of "explaining" things, and through it "truth" is established. Thus truths of science are mathematically exact and clear, such as the laws of motion, the law of gravitation, the laws of chemistry, hydrostatics, hydraulics, mechanics, etc. It is the rigor and vigor of science that the subjectivists insist upon for theology. Thus they drop out of Christian doctrine everything which lies outside of consciousness itself. They limit essential Christianity to certain axiomatic truths, such as the moral law, repentance and faith, and that inner group of truths in general based on the fact that God is our Father and we his sons. These truths are taken by them as being harmonious with the

rigid scientific requirements in the method of explanation.

Now these men fail to appreciate one fatal defect in their position. Their insistence upon scientific rigor and exactness destroys their own foundations. They can never on such principles prove that there is a God or that he is Father. In so far as they do obtain these truths in experience it is in another way altogether. In so far then as they are consistently scientific in their standard of proof and explanation they must become atheists or agnostics. "But," it is asked, "is not the scientific method the logical and only method of finding out truth? Is not logic, after all, the compelling force in all our dealings with truth?" This question leads right up to the issue between the older logic and that deeper, truer logic which recognizes that the will plays a large part in all our knowing. Of course I can only touch one or two salient points. They will, however, show what is meant by the defects of logic.

When I say man is mortal I place in my declaration two terms, one referring to a being possessing the quality of manhood, the other indicating the quality of mortality. Then if I assert that John is a man I easily arrive at the true conclusion that John is mortal. This conclusion contained in the premises is as necessary a deduction as anything in mathematics. Now what have I done in this process? I have singled out man from other objects, and

mortality from other qualities, and John from other men, and I have connected them with each other. This is logic and the logical process. Now in thus singling out John from other men and declaring him to be mortal how much have I told about John? Very little. If I am to learn all about John I must know him. So I find he is a white man, five feet ten inches in height, with a multitude of additional physical qualities. He is a graduate of a great university, a lawyer with certain mental peculiarities, and so on. I might fill a volume with facts about John if I should enter sufficiently into detail. You see my experience of John, my personal knowledge of him, give me vastly more information than any logical process could ever do. And with all I thus learn of John, how small it is compared with John's own knowledge of himself, his inner experiences in all his relationships as well as outward conditions.

Go back now to our pale little logical deduction and compare it with the rich full experience of John himself, and you have a general idea of the contrast between ordinary deductive logic and what is known as voluntarism in our processes of knowing. The logic is sound and necessary for its purpose. But if you were to frame ten thousand logical deductions or syllogisms about John you would not begin to exhaust the knowledge he has of his own life, his own experience. Thus reasoning in syllogisms is like trying to dip up water with a

sieve. It flows through the bottom back into the vessel ere we can lift it out. Perhaps a better illustration would be to say it is like trying to empty the Mississippi River with a teacup. The syllogism, if correctly formed, is true, and through it we may make progress in knowledge, but it is futile to dream of covering all the meaning of life and the universe by means of syllogisms. What we know above and beyond what we reduce to logic is immeasurable. Our living, vital experience in our contacts with the world about us and above us is incalculably richer and fuller than those few phases of it which we reduce to rational and logical form.

Now science purposely limits itself to certain ways of looking at the world and to certain ways of explaining the world. Thus it attains mathematical exactness and within the limits of its just conclusions it is logically beyond all cavil. But how little, after all, do the laws of motion tell us of the bodies which move. How little does the law of gravitation tell us of the universe as a whole. It is the glory and power of science that it does limit itself to the visible and tangible, the sense universe, and to certain ways of dealing with it. How splendidly it has widened our vision of nature. And yet how impotent are its methods to grapple with the higher verities and deeper, richer experiences of man's personal, moral, and religious life.

We easily understand from the foregoing how

inconclusive is the rational process by itself when applied to the explanation of the universe as a whole. In order to deduce the meaning of the universe in a logical way it is necessary to cut out, as it were, a section of it in order to obtain a first principle or major premise as a starting-point. Having done this, of course it is easy to deduce from it a conclusion. But in thus limiting ourselves to a part in order to get something exact and definite to base our reasoning upon we have left most of the world out of account altogether. The materialist starts with matter, the idealist starts with the principle of rationality, and so on through the various philosophies. Hence the unstable equilibrium of philosophy, the inconclusiveness of it. Each general philosophy is an abstraction; that is, some small part scaled off from the totality of things, and there may be as many philosophies as there are parts to scale off, and as there are philosophers with different temperaments and preferences. Now all this does not destroy logic, it only destroys some of its pretensions. It can accomplish far less than has been claimed for it.

At this point enters pragmatism with its doctrine of the will. Its "theory" of knowledge is that the rational principle is not by itself capable of teaching us the meaning of the world. There is another form of knowledge which we obtain not by reasoning, but by living. The doctrine that the will enters into our knowing processes must not be taken



as meaning even the will in the abstract. It means all our nature, including the emotions, the intellect, and the will,—man's total nature in its reactions against the world. This is the way in which we come to know the true meaning of things. Now I do not go with the pragmatists in all their conclusions. I do not, for example, with some of them, reject logic. I accept it within its own sphere and for its own uses. But I do hold with them in the view that we know in the richest and truest sense not by means of logical deduction, but by actual living experience with the realities of the world in which we live, the physical and spiritual universe. Logic is like sitting on the bank of a river and deducing its contents from a fish caught in its waters. The other method is like plunging into the stream itself and learning by contact with it what it contains.

Now it is in precisely this larger, richer form of experience that we acquire truths in the religious life. Religion is not and never was based on logical deductions from the world about us. This is philosophy in the older sense of the word, or the effort to explain by means of the one principle of rationality. In religious experience, on the contrary, we submit our wills to God's will, we enter into fellowship with him, and in so doing we enter a world of new realities. This new world is as real to our experience as a landscape with its hills and valleys and trees and flowers, its sky and its hori-

zon. Indeed, it slowly acquires for the Christian the unity and harmony and beauty of the solar system itself. It is its power to give man this kind of knowledge and experience which is the distinct and unique quality in the Christian religion. Christ mediates to us the knowledge of God and the result follows.

Observe now that there is no conflict in all this with science or with logic. I may still insist that the exact criterion of science be applied in all scientific proof. I demand a mathematical expression of the law of gravitation and the laws of motion, and, indeed, in all that limited sphere where it is possible to apply the exact scientific method of explanation. I may still demand also that logic be exact, that conclusion contain no more than the premises yield. But I am under no obligation whatever to submit my full, rich experience, my knowledge of God and redemption through his grace, to the demands of a criterion of explanation and of proof which belongs exclusively to another sphere, to physical nature. The logical process or rational principle in me may indeed gather up some parts of my new knowledge and experience into premises and deduce certain correct conclusions. But the logic will never more than touch the outer edges of the great deep of experience within me.

Now it will be clear from the foregoing that the standard by which we are to test all alleged truth or knowledge will depend on the sphere in which we

may at the time be moving, the interest which may be uppermost for the time-being. If, for example, a group of great scientists without proof or verification should have announced as the laws of gravitation that bodies attract each other directly as the mass and inversely as the square of the distance we should have refused to accept it on their mere authority. But when by the application of scientific methods of proof and verification they demonstrate the law, we not only accept, but we may for ourselves assimilate the truth and understand its exact mathematical form. But if we are wise we do not demand this kind of proof and verification for the truths of religion and the doctrines of theology. In this sphere the interest ceases to be purely intellectual. Here we crave divine fellowship and redemption.

Our entire nature craves not only truth, but power, moral and spiritual reenforcement; in short, redemption. Christianity comes with its teaching as to God and man and the Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ. The only method of proof here is that of immediate contact with God, the immediate experience of the power we crave, the redemption from sin and its power we so much need. This view of life we accept not as a rational belief merely, but learn it by an act of the will, by vital union with God in Christ. Thereafter we go on verifying the truth of what we have accepted in a thousand ways in our life-experiences. We thus

know the truth, and the truth makes us free. No scientific method which pertains to the physical realm could ever have yielded this knowledge. It is too meager in its scope and range. No logical deduction could ever yield it for the same reason. Thus we slowly assimilate religious truth in the religious way. We make the will a prime factor in our theory of knowledge, and learn truth as we could not have learned it otherwise.

Observe now that it is the confounding of these two methods of knowing that gave rise to Ritschlianism. If the only true knowledge and the only real explanation is that which is derived from the method of physical science, then Ritschl was right, and we must remain agnostics so far as a knowledge of God is concerned. The scientific method never yields it. But the pragmatic method is incomparably superior to that of Ritschl in religion. In the religious sphere we have not to do with physical causation, but with free causation. The same confusion of thought underlies the subjective theologians, who wish to limit doctrine to the moral axioms, and who would reject all religious teaching other than these. They unconsciously insist upon a particular method adapted to satisfy a narrow range of human interests, as if there were no deeper or higher interests. Religious assimilation then is after its kind. It is verification through the actual experiences of life. It is progressive and cumulative in the individual life and history. The revelation of relig-

ious truth came through Jesus Christ. It was the answer to a universal human craving and quest. Men know the truth as thus revealed by methods of verification quite as satisfying as the methods of physical science.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PRINCIPLE OF AUTHORITY

We have now arrived at the point where we may set forth the principle of authority. We reserve the discussion of the peculiar nature of Christian and biblical authority for a later chapter. Here we lay the foundation for that by showing in broad outlines how authority arises and how it is exerted in the progress of the race. Let it be understood always that we are as deeply concerned for freedom as we are for authority, and that our whole undertaking consists in the effort to exhibit these two in their mutual relations, to show that each is implicated in the other, and that neither can be achieved or realized without the other in any manner worthy of the name. My task could be stated as the effort to ascertain either how we achieve freedom, or how authority arises. Let it also be understood that the chief point involved in the current controversy about authority is its externality. We stand for the point of view that the subjective principle is not adequate as a means of defining our relations to religious truth; in other words, that the view of Sabatier and Martineau and men of that school is inadequate and inconclusive.

Briefly and fundamentally we state the case as follows: Authority arises as the result of the interaction of the individual with the universe. The environment over against the individual, whether it be the human environment of society or the physical environment of the cosmos or the spiritual environment of the divine life, inevitably and necessarily, in its interaction with the individual consciousness, creates and validates external authorities of many kinds and degrees. The world and the individual in their mutual interaction and relationships create normative external standards in the form of laws, doctrines, ideals, or world-views.

First of all, we do not choose the universe. It chooses us. Whether or not we come "trailing clouds of glory," we come assuredly at the behest of powers over which we have no control. We are subjects by the very fact of birth, and subjects in manifold ways; as to where we are born, whether in New York or Timbuctoo; as to the color of our skin, whether white, black, red, or of any other shade; as to the racial and social conditions around us, whether civilized or barbarous, whether ignorant or enlightened, whether cultured or debased; as to our physical state, whether inheriting a sound or an unsound body; as to religious opportunities, whether in a society of highly developed spirituality or of degrading superstitions. In a word, to be born merely is to confront a thousand tyrannies. The cosmos stands over against us a colossal menace, a

doom forever impending. We are flung out into the abyss and caught in the waiting hands of titanic powers and tossed back and forth like a ball. And yet it is given to us to achieve freedom. The law of that freedom is deeply written in the constitution of our nature and the world about us.

But let us come to details. Our first reaction upon the world is of course in infancy. To us then it is a vast "buzzing confusion," a meaningless phantasmagoria of sights and sounds. The universe imposes upon our senses, as the initial tyranny, its own phenomena. All the materials for our thought are thrust upon us without the slightest reference to our wishes. What is the psychic process which ensues? Let any work on psychology make reply. We slowly distinguish objects, analyze the phenomena; name or learn the names of the factors in the field of observation; relate objects and sensations to one another, learn to distinguish distance, color, size, and all the other aspects of the world about us; form conceptions of the objects learned; combine the concepts into judgments, combine the judgments into new concepts, and from these pass to new judgments. From these judgments we pass to hypotheses, and through the verification of the hypotheses we formulate laws, and by means of the laws we pass to new fields of research and extend the frontiers of knowledge. It is through this process that science is born. It is needless to illustrate at length or even attempt to



prove the above assertions. They are commonplace in our psychologies. Take a single example: We learn to see correctly by a most complex and elaborate process. The perception of size depends on the perception of distance. If we mistake the distance, an insect seems to us a bird, or vice versa. In infancy there is little accurate perception of either size or distance. To the child the lines may be true:

"Over his head the maple buds,  
Over the tree the moon,  
Over the moon the starry studs  
That drop from the angels' shoon,"

and yet he may be unable to perceive at all how the tree and moon and stars are related to each other from the point of view of distance.<sup>1</sup> Slowly we learn by means of muscular movements and other means to distinguish distance and correlate objects. What is true of vision is also true of hearing and feeling and all forms of sense perception. Thus our primary chaos becomes cosmos. Thus we adjust ourselves and relate ourselves to our environment. Thus we build up a coherent world.

The psychic state which precedes decision is the open state, that in which reasons for and against are balanced against each other. This is the state of suspense and tension and pain and inaction. Action is the result of decision, not openness. Our

<sup>1</sup> Cf. James, "Psychology," one-volume edition, p. 40.

progress in thought and in life is in large measure due to our ability to refer our problems to maxims and classes, to decisions already made. When we proceed to new decisions it is on the basis of the old ones.<sup>2</sup> When decisions become tools for further thought, and especially for action, they become efficient. Openness and efficiency then are contradictory terms. I do not mean efficiency and an open mind, but efficiency and an open truth. Openness in mind and efficiency in speculation are quite compatible with each other. But if openness of mind on a particular point in scientific or philosophic research becomes deep-seated and chronic, it wanes into agnosticism, and loses even the power to stimulate. Its power to excite thought is dependent upon progress toward a static judgment. A man's interest will grow with progressive verification. He will be hot on the trail when the particulars of verification are multiplied. Interest will wane otherwise. Openness of mind, then, is a negative and general virtue only. It is a passing phase of experience, a means to a higher end. The established truth alone constitutes an element in progress, for on it we rise to the next higher truth. The open mind is a condition only, not a factor, of progress of a substantial kind.

Whenever we pass from research to life this is particularly true. The power to achieve, to dare, and to suffer is the great power men need. This

<sup>2</sup> Cf. James, "Psychology," one-volume edition, p. 429f.

power is born of belief and conviction. For science or philosophy, therefore, to make of freedom in the sense of openness of mind the fundamental principle in religion is to do violence to human life. Indeed, it becomes the most intolerable of dogmas in that it puts a permanent estoppel upon the right and joy of man to bind himself to an ideal, or principle, or movement, or cause, or religious object. One of the dearest of human rights is the right of loyalty, the right of men to commit themselves irrevocably. True loyalty is enlistment and issues in apostleship. Affirmation is the primary function of the will, and its paralysis must always ensue upon the denial of that function.\*

Now with reference to the above process two or three remarks are in order as a means of elucidating the principle of authority. The first is that the total objective world imperiously thrusts itself upon us, chooses us for its own, so to speak, and leaves us absolutely no choice in the matter. We are subjects, it is sovereign. The second remark is that we do assimilate gradually the meaning of the chaotic data thus presented to us. The third remark is that our efficiency in the struggle for life, in our adjustments to the world about us, begins to show itself as we begin to acquire concepts of fixed meaning and working value. That is to say, as our perceptions of phenomena are crystallized into concepts and judgments which have objective value and which are

\* See James, "Psychology," p. 454.

thenceforward assumed, we acquire efficiency. And this leads to the further remark that the subjective assimilative process, so far as we have yet seen, is especially characteristic of infancy. It is the sole and exclusive method of absorbing truth in the most infantile forms of experience. In proportion as maturity is attained another process figures largely in cognition, viz., assumptions and judgments, or axioms and established laws. The subjectivists make much of their claim that subjectivism is the method of manhood, whereas really it is peculiarly characteristic, from the point of view of psychology, of the earliest stages of infancy. The openness of mind of childhood is of course always meritorious, but the emptiness of mind of childhood is not. Subjectivism is the resolve on the part of the individual to ignore the crystallized results of the experience of the race, and by a sort of *tour de force* to assimilate the universe himself.

If now we summarize results so far as we have gone we say: (1) We begin our interaction with the world as subjects; (2) even our primary sensations at the birth of thought are "donated," or imposed upon us; (3) the assimilative or analyzing process by means of which we attain a coherent view is always one of suspense and arrest of progress in very large degree; (4) the efficiency of our adjustments and struggle for life is conditioned upon the winning of definite conclusions expressed in judgments, generalizations, or laws;

(5) the conclusions become tools of thought and action in proportion as they become fixed and definite.

From this point we proceed to remark, as indicating the next step, that all our progress is social as well as individual. The experience of the one becomes the experience of the many. Common interests, common aims, common efforts give rise to like experiences of the meaning of life and reality. The individual conclusion is then reenforced by the social sanction. The common experience is funded, so to speak, and becomes the possession of each by becoming the possession of all. Now as a result of this social effort and interaction there arise certain standards by means of which all effort and experience are tested. Truths are crystallized into canons, norms, laws. These are accepted as the expression of the nature of reality and our relations to reality. Now it is this social outcome of man's reaction upon the world which constitutes the basis of all progress.

An analogy may help to make it clear. The law of habit as expounded by physiological psychology will serve us. Acts, when repeated, tend to establish tendencies in the brain substance, grooves, so to speak, along which conduct shall move. Learning to write, for example, very nearly exhausts the motor and brain activity of the child. When skill is acquired writing becomes automatic; that is to say, the previous laborious effort is funded in the brain and nerve substance through cumulative accretions of tendency until the mechanical process of writing

no longer requires attention at all. Thought and imagination and feeling now have play and find through the pen, it may be, a highway to immortality. An exactly analogous process goes on in society. The results of social experience become organic in the social order. Intellectually there is a funding of truths in the same way. Professor Schiller has an interesting essay entitled "Axioms as Postulates," in which he seeks to show how our most commonplace truths were originally hypotheses. Experience slowly verified them and by degrees they attained the dignity of axioms, which we install in the high places of our mental kingdom, and in whose hands we place the scepter to rule over our thought processes. No one of us thinks of attempting to repeat the verification process. We accept the axioms and proceed with our tasks. In like manner the advanced truths of religion become axioms as they are assimilated.

The assumptions of evolution all look in the same direction. Evolution, although it has been a very fruitful and suggestive principle, is not an adequate or sufficient explanation of the world, as we are seeing more and more clearly. But all organs obtain a certain cosmic validity through the action and interaction of the organism and the environment. The organ which survives because of its utility in the struggle for life, its serviceableness in the career of the organism, becomes thereby legitimized in the cosmic order, and receives the cosmic sanc-

tion. The analogue in society to the organ in the organism is the established truth or standard of conduct. Its validity may appear in many ways, but it always appears in its utility and value for the ends of our life and purpose. We have already seen how voluntarism yields the same result. Voluntarism repudiates the merely rationalistic way of finding out truth and asserts that we learn it primarily in our contact with life in all its varied relations and in its manifold fulness. Reason accepts what we thus learn otherwise and expresses it intellectually as best it may, and thus works with it as an intellectual tool and perpetuates it. It thus becomes the crystallized or definitely formulated result of experience itself.

Now every aspect of human life comes under the operation of this law of the externalization of experience in canons, standards, or institutions. The law has as its essential and inalienable meaning that experience is thus externalized. Until this is done the law enacts no great rôle in the on-going of the world. Only as experience becomes social and objective is this possible. But as it becomes social and objective so much the less can its action and its utility be defined exclusively in terms of the subjective assimilative process. Men accept these canons and standards of conduct in a thousand forms simply because the past experience of the race, or its scientific research, commands us to do so.

It is easy to make clear most concretely what is

here meant. In literature there are certain ideals and canons of style and taste. They are numerous and to a certain extent variable. Nevertheless they are a very definite and very coherent assemblage of ideals and standards. We may sum them up under the conception of classicism. Again, human experience in the rational processes gave rise to a careful effort to establish the laws of reason, and we have, as the outcome, what is known as the Aristotelian logic. Human society of course has also struggled long with the problems of conduct. The result is seen in the system of ethics. Ethical systems indeed vary in standpoint and in details, but the general conception and total outcome are clearly defined. The laws of science, again, are the crystallized results of the study of phenomena. Physical science arises thus. In the State the outcome is embodied in constitutions and laws. Thus we might continue to enumerate, but it is unnecessary. The various religions of the world exhibit a similar tendency, and there is no reason why they should not, inasmuch as they represent wide-spread efforts of men to adjust themselves to their various gods, or else, as in the case of Christianity, the result of the experience which follows God's approach to them.

It must be obvious to the reader in view of the preceding that external standards of thought and conduct are abundantly justified by the experience of the race as a whole as well as by psychological



laws which underlie all our reactions upon the world about us. It is perfectly evident, then, that we do not, each of us for himself, assimilate and verify through careful personal investigation the truths and propositions which we accept and adopt as the working principles of our lives. Scientific men do not verify over and over again the formula for the action of gravitation. They accept the previous formulation of that law and proceed with their tasks. Chemists do not refuse to accept the conclusions of their predecessors because they have not personally gone through the various forms of experimentation necessary to establish them. All truths and discoveries tend to become authoritative axioms.

And yet it is this universal law of human progress against which the subjectivists inveigh so vehemently when it is applied in the religious sphere. Nothing is worthy of acceptance in religion save that which the individual can and does intellectually assimilate for himself is the plea which the subjectivists unweariedly urge upon us. Applied in any other form of activity or sphere of experience it would strike paralysis through the very vitals of all progress. It would require that we accept nothing whatever beyond what each one of us had personally made true for himself by his own individual verification. This would mean that the race would to-day be standing and marking time in the same tracks where primitive man stood. It

would mean the denial of social cooperation in human progress. Subjectivism, in other words, is the most reactionary doctrine ever propounded. It is only by ignoring the bearings of their own view in other spheres than that of religion that men are enabled to maintain it at all.

The subjectivists may seek to evade the force of the foregoing consideration by the claim that we are here dealing not with authority in the sense in which they oppose it, but in another sense. What they oppose, they may urge, is ecclesiastical, or prelatical, or hierarchical authority. The Protestant conception of the authority of the Bible, they insist, is exactly the same in principle with that of Roman Catholicism. But we are dealing with authority in exactly the form in which they oppose it. If the reader will turn back to the section, the nature of religious authority, where we outlined the subjective principle, he will find that inner assimilation by the individual is the sole criterion for the acceptance of a truth in religion, and that nothing is worthy of acceptance in the religious sphere merely as the reported opinion of some one else. That which vindicates it is its inwardness, that which vitiates it is its outwardness.<sup>4</sup> One of the fundamental fallacies of the subjectivists is their habit of identifying the principle of authority as such with the Roman Catholic view, and then defining authority in other terms altogether.

<sup>4</sup> See Chap. I.

The Roman Catholic ideal of authority is a convenient weapon for their purposes; but when they come to tell what it is they oppose in other terms, they are found battling valiantly against a principle which has all sorts of justification,—psychological, logical, social, ethical, scientific, religious, and cosmic. For the thing which they combat is not decrees of councils, bishops, or popes, which are enforced under pains and penalties; that is, Roman Catholic authority. They oppose rather the use in religion, as a means of propagation or otherwise, of a body of truths which the deepest religious experience of the race has transmitted to us out of the past. Nothing, in other words, is to be accepted merely because it is the funded experience of the spiritually competent. Such experience when urged upon our acceptance in science no one thinks of questioning. The consensus of the scientifically competent is ample warrant for acceptance.

The authoritativeness of the Scriptures rests upon various grounds. It is difficult to sum them up in a single statement. We do not attempt at this point to do so. But we do insist that the validity of the view which regards the Scriptures as an external source of authority in religion is amply established by the principles we have set forth. From the point of view of the man who has tested the Scriptures in the struggles of life, and who has spiritually assimilated their contents they may be the very word of God. To another who does not yet know them so

deeply they may be authoritative simply as the consensus of the spiritually competent. In the latter case, however, it is a form of authority which directly clashes with subjectivism, for the reason that according to it any form of externalism vitiates the claim of religious authority. In the former case the assimilation is not merely intellectualistic and rationalistic, but spiritual, so that there also is a conflict with subjectivism. It would seem, therefore, that subjectivism has no solid ground to stand upon. If it should conclude that, after all, it will be best to admit the value and power of the verified experiences of the spiritually competent as an external norm in religion, then it will be compelled to return and displace its old foundations with new. For by definition it is inherently opposed to any such admission. If it undertakes to reply by denying that such externalized norms of the religious life are in any real sense authorities, then it will need to explain why it so insistently urges upon us its identification of authority with externality. Externality is of the very essence of authority in its view. The particular variety of the external has nothing to do with the principle itself, for by the definition of subjectivism it cannot be external without being authoritative.

We insist the more upon this point because subjectivism has confused the whole conception of religious authority, and introduced much confusion in religious thinking. It has not taken pains to define

the nature and function of religious authority, but in violation of the fundamental laws of psychology, and in devotion to a chimerical rationalism, it has repudiated all authority. Its reaction has been against the bugbear of Roman Catholic authority in its dealing with the evangelical view of Christ and the Scriptures, with the result that it has never taken the time or pains to find out what the evangelical view, when consistently stated, really is. The dialectic, back and forth, as between subjectivism and Roman Catholic authority, might go on indefinitely, as it has done in Sabatier and Martineau and many others, without ever getting into close quarters with the distinctive elements in the Protestant evangelical point of view. That view is in part as we have abundantly shown, identical with those forms of externalism which are fundamental and universal in human progress.

We note next an unwarranted assumption of subjectivism, viz., that the right of criticism invalidates authority; that nothing can in any sense function as an authority over us unless on the assumption that it is infallible in every sense and that the moment we criticise or claim the right to criticise we repudiate the authority. But there are so many forms of imperfect authority in family, Church, and State that the view would seem to be entirely groundless. Logic, as the laws of thought, and ethics, as the laws of conduct, are externally normative. Thought proceeds chaotically and conduct

proceeds lawlessly without logic and ethics. We know our welfare lies in obedience to them. Yet we may criticise them. Pragmatism is criticising very severely the Aristotelian logic. Professor James relates in his pluralism how he obeyed, as a devoted adherent of the older logic, until he discovered that it could not solve the mysteries of being, and then he gave it up as a means of achieving that result. In ethics also, criticism has been one of the continuous processes without undermining the authority of ethics. Now, it is true that while the critical process is going on, and with respect to those points against which the criticism is directed, and in the degree in which it applies to those points, and for the mind engaged in the criticism, the logic or ethics does not function authoritatively. Criticism and authority are incompatible to this extent indeed. But this is a bare fraction of the area involved. Criticism is of all shades and degrees, from the most superficial and incidental to the most radical. Moreover, it may be throughout merely tentative and provisional. It may reach a point where it is incompatible with the principle of authority, as in the case of Nietzsche's criticism of ethics. But here it takes the form of radical and final repudiation of all ethics. The case is so rare and extreme that the mere statement of it brings a shock to the moral sense of most men.

But let us keep in mind the implications of criticism itself. Criticism implies fundamentally a

definite and determinate constitution of reality and not an indeterminate flow. Implicit in all criticism is the problem of error which could not arise in an indeterminate world at all. In an indeterminate world, in a world without a definite movement or goal, error is inconceivable. For in such a world all forms of psychic life, error included, are legitimate and necessary products of the cosmic movement and are justified by the movement itself. The thing criticised and the criticism alike are equally its products. Criticism is thereby emptied of all meaning or value. If, on the other hand, criticism be legitimate, and we hold that it is, it is because there is a determinate movement and a definite meaning resident in reality. The further fact is that in our individual and social reactions upon it we do acquire some degree of permanently valid knowledge of the world, and that our externalized and thereby authoritative forms of life and culture do attain finality within the limits and to the extent of our attainment of real knowledge.

It is entirely clear then that criticism itself becomes futile after it reaches a certain point, and becomes thereafter a waste of valuable time. It can never set aside our really solid and permanent acquisitions. It is conceivable that criticism may cease altogether at certain points, not by ecclesiastical or civic enforcement, indeed, but because it has become a spent force, having consumed all the material that is inflammable in a given sphere.

It is also conceivable that we may attain final forms of knowledge with respect to some department of experience and culture. Our logic and ethics, for example, may become definitely and finally fixed in form. In this event, and in so far as they do actually attain such finality, do they become externally authoritative. Indeed, it is this process of refining the pure gold of life and experience which constitutes the true meaning of history and which saves us from despair. The race through its struggles, its triumphs, and defeats achieves a knowledge of the truth. Thus by successive stages it chips away the inferior bits of stone which cling to it, and smooths the rough edges of the jewel of truth until it is shaped finally for our uses. In proportion as we succeed in this does truth become objectified and externalized in human life, to be imposed upon each new generation from without, not indeed as a tyranny, but as the choicest part of the human heritage.

Now the practical bearings of the differences between this view and that of subjectivism are of the most vital kind. The method of instruction in the family, the school, the church, and the whole question of the true attitude of the individual to existing forms, are involved. Shall our educational theory take the form that the child should be taught to reject everything it finds in existence until it has personally verified it? In our school-rooms shall we announce the results of past inquiry



as worthy of acceptance or insist rather that the pupil should accept nothing until for himself he has proved it? Shall we continue to proclaim accepted truths in religion or wipe out all religious assumptions and summon all men, young and old alike, to come together to consider for themselves the question whether or not there is such a thing as religion? Shall we abolish the method of the dogma in every form and set up in its stead the method of inquiry? To ask these questions, for the average man, is to answer them. The educational and religious theory which is consistently subjectivist is in the highest degree absurd and impossible.

Yet the two points of view confront each other to-day in sharp antagonism. Rationalism says the method of authority is perilous in the extreme. Voluntarism says it is the only practicable method in dealing with the larger area of human life and experience. Rationalism says the first right of the child is to criticise what it finds current in the world. Voluntarism says the first right of the child is to inherit what the wisdom of the race has transmitted and what the race has verified in experience. Rationalism says criticise and verify before acceptance. Voluntarism says accept and then verify and then criticise. Rationalism says the intellect is competent to deal with questions of truth apart from experience. Voluntarism says the only condition of knowing truth is the experiences of life, and that criticism of the verified experiences of the race is legitimate

only in view of some measure of experiential testing of received truths. Voluntarism says criticism should supervene upon the life-experiences. Rationalism says the critical attitude is the only proper attitude in even approaching the formulated results of past experience. Voluntarism says criticism is a by-product of experience. Rationalism says experience is a by-product of criticism. Voluntarism says criticism is inevitable and necessary as a means of correcting the errors of the past, but that competency to criticise can only arise out of experiences analogous to those out of which past conclusions were deduced. Rationalism declares that criticism is the primary duty of man without any sufficient recognition of the relation of criticism to experience. Thus it appears that the conflict lies in the method of apprehending the relationships between the two points of view, the one side making primary what to the other is necessarily secondary. And just as rationalism is seen to be inadequate to-day so we firmly believe it will be found, when present movements work themselves out, that the rationalistic conception of progress will give place to the deeper and richer one.

How then do we attain freedom if the method of authority is the true method of human progress? The answer follows from what we have been saying. In our interaction with the world we attain definite knowledge which, when externalized in permanent forms, becomes the rule of life for us.

In obeying the rule of life thus prescribed to us by the objective universe we become free. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," this is the eternal law. The error hitherto has been in man's view as to how we know truth. Jesus taught the true way and men are now beginning for the first time to find the theoretical justification of his great words. Our freedom consists in the fulness of life and of joy which results from our conformity to the eternal laws of being as these become known to us in the externalized and authoritative forms of past experiences; and along with this it consists in our privilege of personally reaching out to new discoveries and adding our own contribution to the sum total of those of the past, and so far as is needful and possible our privilege of correcting the errors of the past.

It is evident then that while all imperfect authorities are relative they are not relative in the sense that the principle of authority is waning in its power, but rather that it is waxing. As all forms of culture grow in completeness and toward finality, they will progressively become absolute. If in the present forms of existence they never become perfect, we shall nevertheless make progress toward them as final and absolute and the principle of authority will deepen and widen rather than vanish. Meantime our freedom will keep pace with our progressive obedience to our waxing authorities. We shall more and more assimilate, through heredity and

through education and through faith, the results of our increasing experience. Less and less will these be felt as burdens to carry and more and more as laws of our very being and fountains of eternal joy, but by the very structure of our minds and their relations to the external world we shall never, under present conditions, escape the operation of the principle of external authority.

There is one further point needing elucidation in this chapter. It is that the form in which the external authority manifests itself is always conditioned by the nature of the department of life where it operates and by the relationships of those involved in its operation. In science, in art, in medicine, in literature, and in many other departments it is truth accepted without verification because offered to us as the consensus of the competent, or as the product of mathematical or scientific demonstration. In the family it may be enforced also by penalties. In the State it takes the form of statutory enactments and constitutions which are enforced by penalties, and administered by the machinery of government. In religion practically all the elements named here have been found. The chief characteristics of the religious forms of authority are those which grow out of personal relationships between the individual and the object of worship.

In the preceding we have not discussed religious authority, which we reserve for a later chapter, much

less have we had to do with religious authority in the Christian sense. The ideal form of religious authority is that which is embodied in Jesus Christ. How that authority is mediated to us through the Scriptures we hope to make clear farther on. Sometimes men limit the idea of authority to the spheres in which personal relationships exist, claiming that the word is meaningless elsewhere. It is impossible, however, for practical purposes, to restrict its use thus unless we are willing to take a great part of the meaning from the discussion, or give to the conception of personal relationships a very broad application. Moreover, the issue involved is not that as to personal or impersonal relationships, but rather that as to externally imposed or internally appropriated truth. It is also urged sometimes that loyalty to ideals is a better conception than obedience to authority. Here the personal relationships in religion forbid. Loyalty to an ideal is of course a practicable and highly valuable conception, but taken alone it does not exhaust our relationships to the highest Person. Authority and obedience seem to be the only adequate terms for certain vital forms of relationships here, although of course Fatherhood and sonship involve a higher relationship. And while these do not imply tyranny on the one side nor servility on the other, they do express the meaning of inherent relationships and rest on basal facts. What the relationships of religion are we reserve for the next chapter.

We have outlined on a previous page the earlier stages in the development of authority. There we summed up the preceding discussion by stating that beginning our interaction with the world as subjects, and receiving what is imposed upon us from without, we pass through the experience of observation and suspended judgment to the formation of static conceptions, which in turn become judgments and generalizations, and these last are transformed into tools of thought and instruments of progress in so far as they are definite and fixed in form. To these conclusions we now add the following: (1) Individual discoveries of truth always become socialized. That is to say, they pass over from the individual into common use. Society adopts them and thenceforward accepts them as true without proof. (2) These accepted truths become the didactic element in civilization, that is to say, the treasured result of previous culture, crystallized in forms which render them useful for the purpose of life and thought. All the earlier stages of education recognize this truth. Even when education seeks to abolish the principle of authority and make of it an assimilative process merely, it works always with accepted truths whose assimilation is sought. This, indeed, is the only alternative to abolishing truth as fast as it is discovered and turning back the hands on the dial-plate of time to the beginning with each new generation, and indeed with each individual life. (3) In the third place the knowledge

acquired and transmitted thus takes objective form and expression in accordance with the nature of the subject and the exigencies of life. In logic and ethics and science it is intellectually formulated into canons and generalizations and laws, in government it is enacted into statutes and in religion it takes the form of truths or doctrines; while in both government and religion it gives rise to institutions. (4) In all these particulars we arrive at a clear recognition of the truth that civilization and culture alike proceed fundamentally upon the principle of authority. (5) In the fifth place the right of criticism remains unquestioned. But criticism is not the primary, but only a secondary principle of progress. Its function is incidental to that of authority, and it is sufficiently provided for when authority itself is so conceived or expressed as to include it as incidental and secondary.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NATURE OF RELIGION

#### I. RELIGION DEFINED

In order to elucidate the conception of authority and its relation to freedom in its Christian form, it is necessary first that we discuss the nature of religion. We need not delay over the question of the universality of religion, for it is held now with practical unanimity that the general form of activity which we call religion is a universal human phenomenon. All tribes and peoples are in some sense of the word religious, however far their religious activities may be mingled with superstitions and fall below the Christian ideal. We shall not spend time examining the various attempts at a definition of religion. Many of the recent attempts at defining religion have committed the same fallacy. They have detected some one thing which seemed to be characteristic of religion generally, and have exalted this general conception into the sole and sufficient religious ideal. Or they have thinned out the concrete manifestations of religious activities and beliefs until nothing was left but a pale phantom of the reality.

Another tendency has been to define religion



from the point of view of its earliest or lowest forms among savages or primitive people. This is never an adequate and always a hazardous procedure in cases where a real progress or development has taken place. It would be folly to define other things thus, the present solar system, for example. We would not think of saying: If you would know what the solar system is, including this planet and its inhabitants, look at the primitive fire-mist; it is essentially that and nothing more. Of the full-grown oak no one would contend that it is simply and solely acorn and we must not treat it as anything more. No one commits the folly of asserting that our advanced and highly developed civilization is inherently and essentially nothing more than the tribal life and relations of the South Sea islanders in their crude and undeveloped forms. We cannot understand endings by beginnings. The reverse is the true process. We can only understand beginnings by endings. And yet in many current attempts to tell what religion is men have sought to limit the essential significance of religion to some one temporary manifestation of it belonging to its earlier stages, such as ancestor-worship, or animism, or what not.

Schleiermacher defined religion as the feeling or sense of absolute dependence. But subsequent thinkers have very largely acquiesced in the judgment of one of Schleiermacher's critics that this would make a dog the most religious of beings.

The absence of the cognitive element is one defect of Schleiermacher's definition. Another is that it omits any adequate account of the religious object, as well as of the essential contents of the religious life itself. Some recent definitions are little better than that of Schleiermacher. One writer asserts that the idea of a god is not essential to religion, employing the word god in the widest sense of a super-human spirit or personal object of worship. He then defines religion as containing two elements: First, the recognition of the existence of a power not ourselves pervading the universe, and secondly, our endeavor to put ourselves in harmonious relations with this power.<sup>1</sup> The objection to this definition is that it gives nothing which enables us to differentiate religion from a hundred other things. According to it a man learning to walk on stilts, or a herd of buffalo running from a prairie fire, or a sailor hauling in sail in view of a coming storm, or an aviator balancing his aeroplane among the clouds would have to be classified as performing equally acts of religious devotion. For in every instance there is a recognition of a power not ourselves in the universe, along with an attempt to establish harmonious relations with it. The fact is these elements of the definition belong to religion in common with a vast number of non-religious activities and on this account it is worthless as a definition of religion. Until some clear view is presented as to

<sup>1</sup> F. S. Hoffman, "The Sphere of Religion," p. 10.

the nature of the power not ourselves and of the kind of adjustment to which men seek, we know nothing which is truly characteristic of religion as such.

In defining religion it is essential that we seek the normal elements. In doing so we must needs allow for the pathology of religious life; that is, for instances where men have become so warped in their conceptions of life's ideals that they may be regarded as exceptions and not as instances of the essentially religious life.

With this understanding we may assert that religion contains the following elements in addition to the recognition of a power not ourselves and an effort to establish harmonious relations with it. (1) The object of religion is personal, superhuman spirits, or a supreme spirit. (2) The adjustment is in personal terms and on the basis of personal relationships. (3) Religion includes a cognitive and voluntaristic as well as an emotional element. (4) The aim of religion is redemption. The word redemption is not perhaps the best word, because it is a distinctively Christian word. The meaning is that in religion man seeks alliance with higher personal powers in order to achieve results in war, or to avoid danger of any kind, or for other purposes. Redemption in the Christian sense is highly ethical and spiritual and the ethnic religions sometimes leave out these elements. Moreover, the divine initiative in Christianity as revealed and embodied in

Christ gives to Christian redemption a meaning and value it does not possess anywhere else. Yet the idea of deliverance or salvation in a general sense underlies the religious activities of all men to a greater or less degree.

In the above definition perhaps the point which will be most combated by extreme rationalists is the declaration that religion is carried on in personal terms with personal beings. Buddhism and Brahmanism and Taoism may be cited by them to prove the contrary. But I think the testimony of comparative religion is conclusive on the point notwithstanding the fact that Buddhism is often declared to be a religion without a God. Certainly in the lower forms of religion the object is personal, whether animism, fetishism, ancestor-worship, or polytheism in any of its varied forms be the type under consideration or not. Worship and propitiatory sacrifices prove this conclusively. Whenever religion becomes philosophic speculation, as in Brahmanism, it sometimes resorts to an abstract principle rather than a personal being as the key to explain experience. But in so far as it does this it loses its distinctively religious character and becomes allied with philosophy instead. Even among Brahmans, however, the religious instinct reasserts itself and the personal gods swarm back into the consciousness of the worshiper. A like result followed the Buddhist effort to eliminate God from the religious consciousness. It is precisely the absence of God from Buddhism which

makes it the religion of despair, and leads it to reverse all normal human instincts in the cultivation of the love of non-being and of the effort to extirpate desire. When God departs from religion extinction of being becomes the goal instead of redemption. Despite its elements of value, then, we must declare that Buddhism is not normal, but pathological as a religion. The nemesis of all systems which expatriate the superhuman personality or personalities has overtaken Buddhism and many gods have returned and even Gautama himself has been exalted into a god.

There is indeed a difference between Buddhism and Brahmanism in their conception of redemption, but in both the idea itself persists. With the Buddhist redemption consists in the final extinction of desire. The Karmic expiation through successive incarnations and transmigrations leads to this result. The law of Karma is causality transferred to the moral sphere; the inexorable law of penalty from which there is no escape. Brahmanism seeks redemption through reabsorption in the universal substance. To make this process of reabsorption effective many gods arise, who are aspects or phases of the All. Thus personality in the religious object becomes necessary whenever the idea of redemption takes on a positive form, and ceases to be merely a negative desire for the extinction of being in order to escape the sorrows and sufferings of existence. The logic of this is as obvious as the

facts are clear. The chain of natural causation cannot be broken by other than a personal agency. Karma is the only possible interpretation of a non-personal universe, and in it religion is a form of despair, and the love of non-entity becomes the guiding motive. Escape from the Karmic chain requires personal agencies.

Modern speculative pantheism is sometimes cited as an example of a religion whose object is impersonal, and Spinoza is named as an example of a profoundly religious man holding such a view, while Schleiermacher himself was decidedly pantheistic in many respects. But in these and all similar cases of religious pantheism where the object is non-personal it is to be observed that the religious object is conceived as more than personal. In fact, this "supra-personal" object is a pure abstraction, simply a speculation to escape certain difficulties, real or alleged, in the conception of personality and, therefore, without warrant of any kind in the facts of experience. Yet even here the values which belong to personality are ascribed to this "more than personal" God, so long as the belief itself is attended with a religious life of any kind. So soon as it ceases to be the object of a religious devotion it becomes a materialistic and non-spiritual pantheism. Of course religious devotion is possible in some sense toward an object which has all the attributes of personality and more besides, or which gathers these up into some-

thing higher because through the help of such a being the worshiper may conceivably hope to attain his ends. Pantheism, therefore, in its modern forms may not be cited as an exception to the rule that the religious object is personal. Of course pantheistic *speculation* may dispense with anything personal in its object; but this is not the point we are now discussing, but rather pantheistic religious life.

The mystics of the Middle Ages are not a real exception to the principle. They came to their mysticism from the distinctively Christian environment and saturated with Christian ideas, although that environment was ecclesiastical and formal rather than vital. Professor Herrmann is right in asserting that their mysticism was resorted to chiefly because it was their only means of religious escape from an external and oppressive ecclesiasticism, while maintaining a nominal loyalty to the prevailing religious order. The absence from their experience of the vital inner elements which the New Testament discloses is thus accounted for. The absence of positive Christian contents from their mystic experiences, their pantheistic attitude, is largely owing to their wish to renounce and yet retain their loyalty to the hierarchy. Such a form of experience enabled them to do so. Yet even in these experiences the communion with God is in large part carried on in personal terms.

This leads to the point that all the distinctively religious values are essentially personal so long as

they remain positive, and they can only become non-personal when they become negative or empty of content. Propitiation and sacrifice in all their forms, lower as well as higher, atonement and reconciliation in all their forms, adoration, thanksgiving, praise, fellowship, communion, repentance, a sense of sin, faith, hope, love, all these and others, when they relate to a religious object invariably invest that object with personal attributes. The whole of religious literature teems with such forms of devotion, and in the lower as well as the higher forms of religious devotion practically all the religious activities are carried on in personal terms.

In Christianity the idea of religion culminates. Here intercourse between the human spirit and the ideal Person, God, belongs to the essence of the religious life. Here too, religion becomes ethical. Some of the specific phases of this interaction of the spirit of man and God are the following, which in every instance involve the personal relationship: (1) A sense of sin and alienation from God along with a sense of weakness and need. The sense of sin is meaningless in relation to an impersonal object and prayer to an unhearing one is a mockery. (2) Repentance and faith are the appropriate expressions or completion of a sense of sin and need and in turn are without religious value save in relation to a personal object. (3) Reconciliation and fellowship, which lead to humility and praise, adoration, and worship. Prayer arises now as a vital



experience since the universe ceases to be dumb and becomes responsive and vocal with spiritual meaning. (4) Providential care and God's fatherly love become the clue to experience henceforth, and (5) moral character fashioned after the divine ideal becomes the goal of individual endeavor. (6) This ethical ideal becomes the ground for a new social order, first as spiritually embodied in church life and fellowship, and then in society at large as progressively realized in the kingdom of God.

Now all these values are personal on both sides of the religious relationship. Sin against the cosmos merely is not sin. Schleiermacher's feeling of absolute dependence never becomes truly ethical until the world whole which interacts with man's spirit becomes personal. The bigness of the universe does not save it from emptiness for the religious life. The fetish-worshiper prostrates himself before a stick. The difference between his god and an impersonal universe is the difference simply between a little stick and a big stick.

Jesus Christ personalized religion completely, and gathered up all the elements of all religions into a new combination which was at once their justification and realization. The bad and the low were eliminated, the partial and the fragmentary were completed, the implicit was made explicit, the search of man for God was met by the divine response in God's revelation to man. There is no middle ground between an impersonal and a completely personal

conception of religion. There is no possibility of any realization of the religious ideal apart from a personal object. All theories and definitions of religion are compromises which stop anywhere between the impersonal and the completely personal view of the religious object; and all theories which assume an impersonal object transform religious values into a totally different order of thought in which religion ceases to exist.

The nature of the religious act itself explains the persistence of the personal terms in which it is carried on. The world or cosmos gives occasion for the religious movement of man's spirit in part at least. The desire to overcome the world is the impulse behind it. Man feels oppressed by powers around him which he cannot control, and he feels the desire for assistance in his struggle against these powers. He is thus led to form an alliance with superhuman powers by means of sacrifice and propitiation, or otherwise. His devotion is instinctively anthropomorphic. He conceives these powers as personal, because thus alone do they seem to him to be able to succor him. In nature-worship he conceives the object worshiped as hearing and heeding him, or the reverse. In animism and fetishism he thinks of a spirit as inhabiting the object, or of having connection with it, and so in the various forms of idolatry. To primitive man will seems to be a practically invariable attribute of the object of religious devotion. So soon as the naïve

and instinctive worship of personal beings gives place to reflection and observation in the ordinary scientific sense and men attain the conception of nature as a system with causally connected parts, a struggle takes place to adjust this impersonal to the personal religious world.

If the principle of causation obtains thoroughgoing recognition as in the Brahman and Buddhist Karma, then the course of development is either pessimistic and religion is emptied of all positive content, as in the Buddhist extinction and the Brahman reabsorption in the absolute; or else it becomes optimistic again through the return of the personal agents of redemption, the god. Brahmanism and Buddhism are instances of the arrested development of religious thought at its most critical stage. In both there is a profound grasp of the inherent antithesis between the physical and the personal worlds without a corresponding ability to reconcile the interests of the two spheres save by sacrificing completely those of the personal. In our Western thought this is precisely the form which the issue has taken, although of course in far different terms. With us the supreme problem for thought for a generation or two has been that of reconciling the interests of the world of persons with those of the world of physical laws.

The religious man seeks redemption or salvation. This does not mean something which refers exclusively to the future, nor does it necessarily

imply in its lower ranges an ethical form of experience. Among savages the gods are simply very useful allies, who may be induced to bestow a gift or avert an evil of the most practical kind. In the religious life of man there is the greatest possible variety. It is denied by some that belief in immortality is essential to the conception of religion. As a matter of fact, comparative religion shows that some form of belief in a future life is practically coextensive with religion itself, and as we have seen, religion is coextensive with the race. If, therefore, we are to look for an empirical basis for the definition of religion, that is, if we are to derive our conception of religion from the facts of life and experience rather than from speculative thought, it would seem to be at least possible, if not necessary, to include belief in a future life as an element in religion. The religions of the East in the doctrine of transmigration are an instance of the belief, although they consider extinction or reabsorption of the soul as the final outcome. The future life, then, is a factor in practically all forms of religion.

There is one method of defining religion which must be noted here. It is quite common now to define religion as a belief in the "achievability of values" or of "universal values." This is Höfding's view as we have seen, though he employs the phrase "conservation of values." Prof. George B. Foster defines religion as "the conviction of the achievability of universally valid satisfactions of the

human personality.”<sup>2</sup> The chief objection to this form of statement is its indefiniteness. It is true the definition may and does include religion, but it is also true that it may and does include forms of life and culture which can be designated as religious only with violence. All depends upon the nature of the “universally valid satisfactions,” and of the meaning of “achievability.” If, for example, a man has adopted materialism as his philosophy, and continuity in the physical sense, causation in other words, as the sole criterion of explanation and of truth, and the attainment of scientific certainty regarding the natural world as the chief goal and activity of man, then his “universally valid satisfactions” will have a very narrow range. His particular belief in continuity and his appreciation of scientific certitude are both “universally valid satisfactions.” But if held to the exclusion of other forms of human satisfactions they do not imply or necessitate anything whatever peculiar to the religious life of man. The conviction of the achievability of these satisfactions may and does sometimes accompany a total rejection of religion. Mr. Haeckel accepts these forms of satisfaction, but empties the religious values of their real significance.

In like manner there are esthetic and ethical and social satisfactions and values which are universally valid, but which do not belong to the essence

<sup>2</sup> See “The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence,” by G. B. Foster, p. 188.

of religion. Religion combines all the elements of life and culture in its own way, indeed, but this is not to identify them with religion. The definition fails therefore to discriminate between religion and other things. It contains again the fallacy of the universal. "Achievability" also is an equivocal word. To achieve may mean merely a subjective psychological process unless some regard is had to an object through which or through whom the achievement takes place. In religion superhuman powers are required in order to achieve results. To the average man it would throw his religion into chaos to tell him that there is no objective helper for him in his religious struggle. Only by defining religion abstractly rather than empirically can we arrive at so empty a view as merely indeterminate "achievability." If we ask of the religions of the world concerning their beliefs as to how their ends are achieved, their answers are quite definite.

In general it may be said that the prevailing tendency to define religion abstractly as in instances we have just cited, the tendency to substitute "values" merely or "satisfactions" merely for religious objects and an indefinite "achievability" for the concrete and positive contents of the actual religious life and beliefs of men, is due to the apologetic desire to take refuge in a citadel which the scientific man cannot successfully assail. The outcome is that the apologist does find such a citadel, but he thereby loses religion. Ultimately all that his plea means is

that man has a religious consciousness. It is a return to the starting-point of the Cartesian philosophy "I think, therefore I am" modified to read "I think religiously, therefore I am religiously." The apologist thus flees from the problem of religion rather than solves it. He does not construct a philosophy of religion; he simply names a single datum, that of consciousness, which justifies a single assertion about man, namely that he thinks religiously and finds it useful. Here again the modern spirit does obeisance to physical continuity, and prostrates itself at the shrine of physical science to the neglect of the personal world and personal relationships.

Religiously the outcome is like that of theoretical Buddhism and Brahmanism, despair of immortality and an eternal kingdom of God, a renunciation of belief in our survival of bodily death as essential to religion and a pantheism which is the practical equivalent of naturalism. If our human life and our human "values" are to be called to judgment at the bar of physical continuity, our doom is sealed beforehand. Unless modern religious thought can have the courage to work out consistently the assumptions of personality and religion as concretely given in human experience, it is vain to talk about the "conservation" or "achievability" of religious values. If religious thinkers, out of dread of the attacks of scientific men, insist upon limiting religion to what can be defended as the conclusions of exact science are defended, forgetting the religious

methods of assimilating truth, and forgetting the distinctiveness of the religious sphere, then they will indeed flee from the lowlands and the valleys and each individual will scale the peak of personal consciousness and from that height he will laugh at the scientific arrows which may be shot toward him, but at the same time his habitation will be too narrow for free action and isolated from his fellows, and high as he may be on his lonely peak no personal God will be there to comfort or sustain him. In short, it is not religion, but merely a truncated semblance of it which can be defined in purely subjective terms. The writers cited above do not indeed reject the view outright that the object in religion is unreal.

The objection to their definition is that it is so indeterminate that it includes the possibility of the complete emptiness of religious beliefs. The very life of religion is bound up with the objective reality which sustains it. John Fiske's interesting argument from development is in point here. It runs thus: Life and growth are the result of the adjustment of internal relations to external relations. The inner vital principle of the plant is adjusted to the environment, for example, and there is intercommunication between them. All living organisms are dependent upon this harmonious adjustment for their growth. When it is interrupted they die. The fact of growth in the organism is proof of the real correspondence with an objective environment. The



idea of God has undergone a gradual growth and purification in human history and it has persisted through all forms of human life. Unless God actually exists as the religious environment of man, we have in religious phenomena a marked exception to the fundamental law of evolution. So he argues.<sup>3</sup>

We are not concerned at this point, however, with arguments for God's existence. It is the intellectualizing of religion which has often rendered it barren and unfruitful. Our chief concern now is to include the essential elements of religion in a definition. This cannot be done by making the reality of religion turn upon its conformity to alien principles or interests. The continuity with which science works in physical nature cannot explain it, and the rationality with which speculation works to produce world-views cannot fully compass it. Religion is, indeed, a form of thought; but first of all it is a life. Its rationality is the blossom which opens on the stalk of a vital form of experience. Religion is the experience of the achievability of a particular group of values through alliance or intercourse with a superhuman personal power. If we would define more closely what those values are, we need to begin by excluding other values which are achieved in other forms of human activity. The rationalizing process in its abstract form is excluded, because it is distinct from religion. Scientific observation and classification, while immensely significant and use-

<sup>3</sup> John Fiske, "Through Nature to God," pp. 189, 190.

ful, are distinct from religious activity. Esthetic and ethical achievements are possible within certain limits apart from religion. These are not the religious values. Religion is as distinct from them as they are from each other. The values which religion seeks are those which arise in man's conflict with the external world as it overpowers him in his conflict with sorrow, loss, and doubt, in his struggle against sin, disease, and death; that is to say, the values which arise as the result of the longing for victory over the world and self, the longing for blessedness and purity and for endless life. It will be noted that these values are sought in all religions, including Christianity. We have purposely sought to include the characteristics of religion as a world phenomenon. Christianity in its ethical ideals and in its revelation of supernatural power for achievement is far superior to other religions. In these respects it is not merely a difference in degree, but a difference in kind.

It will be seen at a glance that this group of values is distinct from the other groups, and that to confound the various groups is to introduce chaos. Moreover, to apply the criterion of reality and of truth in one sphere to the material of the other spheres is nothing less than tyranny. There is no sort of violence available which can enable us to deal successfully with the religious principle in man as we deal with continuity in nature. And yet the greater part of the confusion which has arisen in the last

fifty or sixty years in writings which have dealt with the relations between science and religion has been due to the false assumption that the criteria of physical science alone may be employed to determine the contents of religion. We must then recognize the independence of religion, its autonomy, so to speak, in its relations with other forms of human activity.

Life has many dimensions. Religion is one of them; science is another; and so on. Scientific absolutism would reduce life to mere flatness without perspective or depth, like a Chinese picture. Any one who imagines that he can compass all the manifold wealth of being under a single dimension does not know life as it is. Human life is complex, not simple, and to reduce it to simplicity is to ignore much. To run a scientific or philosophic flat-iron over its corrugated surface may indeed smooth it out, but it will also break it into bits. It cannot be smoothed out in this way. Religion, therefore, must be allowed to stand. Life and being, if construed religiously at all, must be construed boldly and consistently. Half-hearted definitions, in which lurk the surrender of religion, will not serve the ends of religion. They will only answer for the man who is already convinced that the house is on fire and is glad to escape in his night-robe. As walking is a human function, a physical life-adjustment, which the infant acquires without the slightest knowledge of the laws of locomotion or of gravity, so religion

is a life-adjustment, prevalent over the whole earth, which does not and need not wait for scientific verification. What it needs and obtains is religious verification. It is a life-adjustment, including all the elements of our nature, intellect, emotions, will. Its sphere of activity is that of personality, and religion itself is the supreme personal adjustment, resulting, as in other personal adjustments, in new forms of experience and new forms of knowledge.

## 2. RELIGION AND SCIENCE

In order to complete the idea of religion we now show its connections with some other forms of human culture. First we note its relations to science. We need here to avoid certain errors. Religion and science do not differ in the sense that science deals with facts, with forms of reality, while religion has to do with mere beliefs or fancies or forms of unreality. Religion also deals with real objects. It too is empirical in that it starts from actually given data of experience. These refer to an object outside of consciousness. They are not merely subjective. Nor is it true that science is systematic and connected while religion is unsystematic and disconnected, nor that science requires proof while religion accepts without proof. Religion requires the open mind, the absence of prejudgment and mere prejudice. It requires a willingness to accept any and all truth from any source. It may employ hypotheses. It sets forth the

results of experience in definite forms of teaching, although we must keep in mind the difference between theology and religion. Religion always has a theology, but there may be theology without religion.

Wherein then does the difference consist? It consists first in the spheres or worlds of reality with which they respectively deal and in the principles of explanation and proof. Science in the usual sense of the word deals with nature. Its leading assumption is that the world is a machine controlled by mathematical law. It explains as we have seen by means of the principle of continuity. Religion, on the other hand, deals with the world of persons, of wills, of purposes, of intelligences, and it explains by means of the principle of the interaction of free personal wills. It holds to free causation while science insists on physical causation.

Let no one imagine I am overstating the case when I assert that the clash between science and religion arises almost wholly from a failure to recognize the above distinctions. A man who insists that nothing is "explained," that no "truth" is discovered, that we have no knowledge, except that which comes in the form of explanation in the physical world will certainly reject all explanation in personal terms. That there are such men we need not pause long to indicate. We have seen how Professor Höfding rejects personal explanation entirely. The idea of God explains nothing, he asserts, since God is not in the causal chain of nature in

any manner with which science may reckon. 'A recent critic of Professor Bergson says: "The history of scientific discoveries is a history of naturalistic successes: for no scientific discovery has ever been made that is not based on materialism and mechanism."'<sup>4</sup> This writer insists that all human actions and hence all forms of science, even those which deal with man and society and with religion, are alike fruitless apart from explanation in terms of physical causation.

Now it is to be feared that a goodly number of theologians to-day are trying to make terms with the above school of thought and at the same time retain religion. Can this be done? In reply we may note several possible paths which diverge from the view that mechanical explanation is the only real explanation. First there is the path of materialism. It may be concluded that there is nothing in existence except matter. There is also the path of agnosticism. It may be admitted as possible that there are realities behind matter unknown to us and unknowable by us. Either of these views cancels religion. There is again the path of the philosophic world-view, which leads to belief but not to knowledge. The reason deduces from the data of science a rational explanation of the world. Theism, or the belief in a personal God, may arise thus and the door be opened to a general religious belief.

<sup>4</sup> See "Modern Science and the Illusions of Professor Bergson," by Hugh S. R. Elliot, p. 167.

But other principles may be employed and the philosopher may reach a non-theistic conclusion. A religious belief based on a world-view deduced from the data of science will thus be only so strong as the arguments employed for its support. It will not have the strength of living experience, which is not a rational belief merely, but a direct knowledge of God.

There is yet another path diverging from the theory that mechanical explanation is the only real explanation. It is the path of mysticism. Admitting that physical causation is the only source of knowledge, and distrusting philosophy because it is so unstable and inconclusive, and yet seeing the need and power of religion a man may claim to have real experiences in unison with some kind of power above the human concerning which we may make no other assertion whatever. This mystic experience is not knowledge and hence cannot be combated by other forms of knowledge. Science cannot attack it since it presents nothing tangible to oppose science. Now religion has a mystical element, but mysticism without knowledge, without doctrine, never has served and never can serve the ends of religion fully, and especially in a scientific age which cannot tolerate the vague and unreal.

It is clear then that none of the paths indicated leads to religious knowledge. This can come only by abandoning physical causality as the one and only form of explanation and proof. Religion

begins with another group of facts. Human freedom is one. This is given to us as a fact of consciousness. It is not a fact to be explained away, but to be accepted. Personality and personal interaction, communion, and fellowship are facts. Redemption is a fact known to us in experience. These do not cancel scientific knowledge. They simply enlarge the sphere of truth and increase the forms of explanation.

### 3. RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY

The wonder-working word for a large number in our day is psychology. We have as a consequence of the prevalence of the psychological standpoint works on the psychology of education, of ethics, of religion, and of everything else. But the psychologists themselves have as yet reached no final agreement as to the sphere and function of psychology proper. On the one hand, psychologists are claiming all human activity as a part of the domain of psychology, while others are loudly calling for an abatement of these claims. We do not propose at all to enter the controversy which we leave to the psychologists. We may, however, observe a few things which are pertinent to our present point, viz., its relation to religion.

Modern psychology proceeds upon the assumption that every mental act is attended by a brain process. Stimuli reach the brain through the nerves in the form of sensations, producing reflex



and motor discharges of various kinds, and thus arises the conception of physiological psychology. There is in this no ground for the alarm felt at one time by many people lest psychology of this type might aid and abet a materialistic philosophy. It was soon recognized that a mental and physiological parallel was all that was necessarily involved and not at all an identity of mental activity with the brain process. Spiritual philosophy fares as well under physiological psychology as under any other when the limits of psychology are understood.

There was, however, a real danger to our higher interests in the effort to reduce human life by means of psychological laws to the level of physical nature. The principle of conservation of energy, or physical continuity, according to which causes and effects are quantitatively equal, was transferred to the psychological field. Just as nature was theoretically broken up into atoms, so consciousness was broken up into sensations. And as in physical nature causation was the sufficient principle of explanation, so it was also assumed and is yet assumed by many psychologists as the sufficient principle of explanation in their sphere. The inner connection of mind states, and of mind states with brain states, was thus observed and the laws deduced and the science of psychology developed in a manner parallel to the development of the physical sciences. The evolutionary principle of the origin of organs and functions in response to needs in the struggle for

life was employed to explain our psychic action, and thus the whole of man's mental and moral and spiritual life was construed by means of continuity or transformation of energy.

Of course it is easy to see that if it is assumed that this method of explanation is adequate to account exhaustively for the mental and spiritual life of man, psychology would lead simply to a closed mechanical system like physical nature. It was felt by psychologists that unless their principle of explanation, that is, the quantitative equivalence of cause and effect, were applied rigorously there could be no really scientific psychology. The demand for order and a fixed criterion of truth and explanation being inherent in the scientific attitude and continuity being so universally valid in physical nature it was only with great reluctance that psychologists admitted the presence of factors in our psychic life which transcend entirely the action of the causal law. Of course there was never any demonstration of the quantitative equivalence of mind states and brain states. And now at length there is increasing recognition of the will as lying outside the causal series. It is in fact another order of reality. The personal life of man, in other words, constitutes an original center of energy wholly unlike the forms of energy which we designate as merely physical. There is no continuity as between the various wills of men so far as demonstration has gone, as there is none as between brain and thought.

All this appears most distinctly when we observe that the forms of psychological explanation may be valid for psychology while irrelevant to life itself. The same sort of psychological explanation would apply to the contents of the mind of George Washington, the great commander, and the humblest soldier in the ranks of his army; to Raphael and the meanest smearer of paint on canvas. The psychic laws in so far as they are valid are universally valid, as are the laws of the cosmos. But those universally valid psychic laws never compass the originality, the variety, the inequality of life itself. Professor Münsterberg puts the case strikingly as follows: "We can say that Socrates remained in the prison because his knee muscles were contracted in a sitting position and not working to effect his escape, and that these muscle processes took place because certain psycho-physical ideas, emotions, volitions, all composed of elementary sensations, occurred in his brain, and that they, again, were the effects of all the causes which sense stimulations and dispositions, associations and inhibitions, physiological and climatic influences, produced in that organism. And we can say, on the other hand, that Socrates remained in the prison because he decided to be obedient to the laws of Athens unto death. This obedience means, then, not a psycho-physical process, but a will-attitude which we must understand by feeling it, an attitude which we cannot analyze, but which

we interpret and appreciate. The first is a psychological description; the second is a historical interpretation. . . Both are equally true, while they blend into an absurdity if we say that these psycho-physical states in the brain of Socrates were the objects which inspired the will of his pupils and were suggestive through two thousand years."<sup>5</sup>

Professor Münsterberg goes on to show how history fails utterly in its purpose if it neglects the teleological and personal world of wills and will relations and attempts to confine its explanation to human happenings due to climatic and geographical, technical and economic, physiological and pathological influences. In history we are in the realm of freedom while in psychology we are in the realm of causality, or rather of psycho-physical parallelism, and the differences are radical and incommensurable. Professor Münsterberg attempts to give accurate definitions of the various sciences, and although his terminology does not seem to the present writer to be very felicitous he makes his points clear. He says: "We have the science of over-individual objects, that is, physics; secondly, the science of the individual objects, that is, psychology; thirdly, the sciences of the over-individual will-acts, that is, the normative sciences; and last, not least, the sciences of the individual will-acts, that is, the historical sciences. Physics and psychology have thus to do with objects; history and the normative

<sup>5</sup> Münsterberg, "Psychology and Life," pp. 219, 220.

systems, ethics, logic, esthetics, deal with will-acts. Psychology and history have thus absolutely different material; and one can never deal with the substance of the other, and thus they are separated by a chasm, but their method is the same. Both connect their material; both consider the single experiences under the point of view of the totality, working from the special facts toward the general facts, from the experience toward the system. And yet the difference of material must, in spite of the equality of the methodological process, produce absolutely different kinds of systems of science."<sup>6</sup>

In general, then, Professor Münsterberg insists with vigor upon the separation of the sciences which deal with causality and those which have to do with freedom. Of course religion is included in those whose material rises above the causal chain and belong to the teleological sphere. He asserts that for the man who sees the difference between reality and the psychological transformation, immortality is certain. To such a man the denial of immortality is quite meaningless. Death being a biological process in time it cannot affect that reality in us which is above time, and being in the causal chain it cannot affect that in us which lies outside the causal chain.<sup>7</sup>

The above exposition is sufficient for our present purpose. It is necessary to break the psychological fetter which has bound religion as it was to break

<sup>6</sup> "Psychology and Life," p. 205.

<sup>7</sup> "Psychology and Life," pp. 278, 279.

that of physical causality, and it is now seen that the two fetters are the same in kind. Religion no doubt has its psychological side, but religion cannot be identified with psychology nor is psychological explanation sufficient in religion. Religion belongs to the world of freedom, not to that of causality, and this is gradually dawning upon many minds. But we are confronted with the phenomena of the dawn in many of those minds. They do not see all the implications of this distinctness of sphere, and as a consequence we have any number of compromises in which religion is still partly tethered to the alien powers. Somehow it is still felt by many that while the rights of religion are assumed, yet religion must always return and make terms with physical or psychological continuity before anything is permanently gained. As we have seen, it is felt by many of these that mystical experiences of some kind seem to be genuine. At the same time these are wholly vague and indeterminate in positive content. Along with this is found in many instances a very definite regard for the ethical teachings of Jesus. But these can proceed no farther. The needed synthesis of the severed parts they cannot attain. The terror that lurks along the forward path to smite them down is physical and psychological science with its two-edged sword of causality.

There is, however, a way of escape if they will but recognize it, and that is a courageous as well as consistent construction of the material furnished us by

religious, and in particular by Christian experience. This is not a *petitio* for the Christian view. We are not assuming its truth outright. It simply means that we obtain in the Christian life a self-consistent and final synthesis of the various factors recognized as essential to religion. But we never arrive at a solution of the religious problem at all so long as we insist upon playing fast and loose with the religious principle itself. If there is a personal and teleological realm of purpose, ends and values, a realm as real as any other, then we simply retard progress and repress life so long as we endeavor to construe its activities by means of criteria which belong to a lower sphere.

#### 4. RELIGION AND ETHICS

By ethics we mean the laws of conduct. Is it possible to set forth a system of ethics without metaphysical assumptions? So it is held by many. Positivism refuses to admit the propriety of such assumptions. Utility in the struggle for life is regarded as a sufficient explanation of the ethical ideal. The ethical quality in man is regarded as the result of struggle in a social environment resulting in the establishment of certain conventional standards of conduct, which in turn tend to be perpetuated by heredity and otherwise, and thus the basis for the science of ethics is supplied. The quest for pleasure, known in ethics as Hedonism, or of happiness in the larger social sense, known as

Eudemonism, is then made the key to the ethical history of mankind and regarded as a sufficient criterion of explanation. But this form of ethical theory never rises to the ethical at all. It is incapable of ascribing any fundamentally valid ethical character to human conduct. It puts the ethical on the same plane with the beastly in fundamental conception, since it assigns no character to ethics which raises it above the lower forms of utility.

The other theory of ethics, known as intuitionism, fails to supply an ethical principle securely grounded until it transcends human consciousness itself for the ultimate explanation. The presence in us of a moral sense it is, of course, proper for us to recognize and respect. But devotion to the moral ideal cannot be stimulated without some further consideration. As has been said more than once, well-being bears an essential relation to being. It is impossible to lop off the moral nature of man from the universe of which it is a part and make it successful in its action. Many who are strenuous for the ethical ideal recognize that man's moral nature is an essential part of or essentially related to something vaster, and that somehow it must be so dealt with in our ethical theories. Logically the next step with such men would be a theistic view of the world. But as theism is difficult to harmonize with the scientific criterion of continuity, resort is usually had to a compromise of some kind. It is not asserted that God is the source of the ethical ideal,



but rather that in the on-going of the world ethical values have been evolved. These we are to appreciate and accept and achieve, it is urged.

Thus the universe as a whole is made to secrete the ethical, so to speak, as one of its processes in the little human niche which we occupy. If there is a personal God, he has been evolved as we have been, and has become ethical in the same way. He has his own struggle and his own "values" to "achieve" equally with ourselves. It follows that he can be of no particular use to us to whom the ethical task is committed and to whom nothing can be "donated" from without except on pain of disaster to the ethical principle itself. This view of course assumes some primary principle or force behind God and man alike, out of which both are evolved; and if no ethical being existed at the outset, the ethical may be merely an incident in the evolution of the universe. If it is merely an incident, it will in due time be transcended and the ethical will cease to be.

This brings two results which are fatal to human struggle and human hope. One is that all the ethical values are seen to be without a permanent basis, and to most men scarcely worth while. Thus the "achievability" of "universally valid" ethical values becomes an illusion. A still further result is that if "ethical values" are given any sort of validity, transient or permanent, in such a universe, then the non-ethical and the unethical

values are given precisely the same sort of permanence and validity. A non-personal and non-ethical energy or blind will from which the cosmos is evolved without purpose or design can have no favorite children. The bad is as real as the good in such a world and the moral distinction itself vanishes.<sup>8</sup> A view of this kind is a straight and short road to pessimism. A hopeful outlook upon the world cannot be deduced from blind energy as the first principle and of change as the fundamental law of being.

Theoretically, then, some form of theism is the only secure basis for ethics. The good is a permanent value because purposed as the goal of all things. Otherwise Spinoza's view is as valuable as any of the many compromise views which have followed and which have been in one form or other modifications of his. But having said so much the relations between ethics and religion do not yet come fully into view. Ethics, even in the theoretical form, remains abstract. A philosophical basis does not convey ethics out of the sphere of the formal and normative sciences into that of life itself. It is when we relate ethics to religion rather than to philosophy that we see the two in their most significant and illuminating aspects.

The principle of explanation which will best serve us in relating ethics to religion is the principle common to both, viz., personality. Ethics is the sys-

<sup>8</sup> See G. B. Foster, "Function of Religion," p. 173f.

tem of laws or standards of conduct which set forth the relationships of persons in human society. The ethical is meaningless apart from the personal. In like manner, as we have seen, religion is essentially concerned with personal relations between God and man. Now the ethical becomes vital and living whenever the entire kingdom of the personal is its sphere and not merely the human. Ethics remains formal and normative so long as one set of personal relationships only is kept in view. When a man's relations to God as well as to other men are considered we see how vastly the range of personal relationships is extended and how the ethical undergoes a transformation. Of course the science of ethics remains even then and does not necessarily become identical with religion; but the personal relationships underlying the ethical principle appear in a new light when religious experience begins to illumine and to energize them.

It is at this point that the Christian view of the moral life appears at the greatest advantage. The teachings of Jesus are saturated with the ethical to such an extent that some moderns emphasize his ethics to the exclusion of his religion. But in this they fail to discern the relations between the ethical and the religious in his teachings. To Jesus the worship of God and the service of man were indissolubly bound together. It was indeed the divine energy of religion brought into the human soul which made the ethical in the high Christian sense possible of

realization in human conduct. This is seen in the nature of the religious experience itself. "Repent ye and believe the gospel" was his message throughout his ministry, as it is recorded in the first chapter of Mark's Gospel. Repentance and faith are both ethical and religious in their meaning, and they constitute the nexus between ethics and religion in Christianity. Repentance has regard for the sinfulness of sin and requires its radical repudiation in order to restored fellowship with God. Faith involves a personal relationship of man to God, which is a condition of the actual union of the divine with the human and the divine reenforcement of the moral will of man. Out of this root springs the whole ethical life of the Christian. The ethics of the gospel presupposes a regenerated life, and the regenerated life fails of its chief end unless it takes the form of ethical achievement. Redemption, in other words, becomes a moral process. One of the chief difficulties of the forensic forms of theological teaching has been to avoid a separation between the vital and the moral sides of religion. It is the supreme achievement of Jesus that he united the two inseparably so that neither is significant or valuable in any adequate degree without the other. Professor Herrmann, in his notable work "The Communion of the Christian with God," has brought out this aspect of the Christian religion in a very striking manner.

We may gather up what we have been saying in

the following statements. Religion and ethics are not to be confounded or identified with each other formally, but they unite in the Christian experience. The points of union are as follows: First, man's personal relationships are regarded as inclusive of God as well as of human society in the Christian religion. The common ground of ethics and religion is that of personal relationships. It is for the reason that ethics is essentially and inherently a matter of personal relationships that philosophically ethics cannot be successfully defended on the basis of a non-personal world-ground. All the ethical values collapse along with the substructure so soon as any postulate other than a personal one is set forth as the ultimate basis of ethics. Secondly, the religious and the ethical unite in Christianity because therein the religious aim, redemption, takes on the ethical form. The meaning is that the Christian salvation is salvation from sin and unto righteousness. Every part of it is ethical in its contents and in its goal. Redemption in the lower forms of religion may be various forms of deliverance from the powers of nature or other dangers. In Christian redemption the primary aim is moral and spiritual deliverance. Other forms of deliverance are wholly secondary to this. The redemption itself takes place in a religious way, that is through the action of the divine upon the human. But the ethical contents of the redemption abide. In Christianity then the ethical and the religious are the obverse and

the reverse sides of consciousness so to speak. In so far as religion finds expression manward it is ethical, and in so far as ethics finds expression Godward it is religious.

Thirdly, in Christianity the ethical blends with the religious sanction. We no longer pursue virtue as isolated from its ground. Duty becomes primarily duty to God. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned" is the cry of the penitent. The Christian religious sanction gathers up that of scientific ethics in a higher unity. It does not deny the assertion of intuitional ethics that virtue is inherently worthy of pursuit, nor the utilitarian plea that the moral life secures happiness or even pleasure. It rather asserts both, but grounds the virtue itself in the divine and exalts pleasure to the plane of moral and spiritual values.

Fourthly, it is because of these relations between ethics and religion in Christianity that in the New Testament duties have become graces. All moral acts are regarded as fruits of the Holy Spirit and performed with the religious sanction. They are the direct result of the action of God upon the soul. From this it appears that Schleiermacher's view is incorrect when he asserts that we should never perform moral acts "from" but always "with" religion. He means by this that the religious and ethical ideals are too distinct to be regarded as proceeding the one from the other. His definition of religion as the "feeling of absolute

dependence" and his impersonal world-ground really left no nexus between ethics and religion. His philosophic assumptions forbade their union. But, as we have seen, in the Christian view we have in the initial religious act, repentance and faith, precisely the transition required from ethics to religion. For those acts of the soul are both ethical and religious. They require a personal object on the religious side as they require personal objects on the ethical. Thus we return to the assertion that the common ground of the ethical and religious life of man is to be sought in the idea of personality and of personal relationships. It is this which enables us to conceive the unity of all personal life, divine and human, under the supreme ideal of Jesus, the kingdom of God.

It does not follow from the above that the science of ethics is destroyed. For it remains possible to formulate the laws of conduct apart from religion. Sanctions may be found, such as they are, below the religious plane. Likewise religion in its lower forms is often seen with very slight if any ethical contents. Hence as a form of worship and activity religion may remain to a very great extent apart from ethics. This formal scientific separation of religion and ethics, then, has its warrant and its value. But it remains true nevertheless that in life and experience we may see how the two unite. The ethical point of view may be carried up into the religious when we conceive the religious acts as

involving personal relations; just as we may bring the religious point of view down into the moral life when the religious sanction takes the place of the ethical and the divine energy in the soul converts duties into graces. That is to say, when religion in the Christian sense becomes a fact in the soul ethics is lifted to a higher plane and becomes essential to religion itself.

It is at this point that we see the Christian solution of the problem of mysticism. Mystical experiences are an unquestionable fact in man's life. The weakness of mysticism is that it is subjective, emotional, and indeterminate. Christ made it objective by grounding it in a personal God, and he made it cognitive as well as emotional by the specific character which he assigned to God as Father, and he made it determinate and practical by prescribing an ethical task. Jesus was a mystic of the most pronounced type if we define mysticism as fellowship with God. But Jesus was no mystic at all if mysticism be regarded as an indeterminate emotional communion with the infinite without specific theological meaning and apart from the moral life. The conception of God the Father was very definite in the mind of Jesus and ethical obligations and relationships were, in his teaching, of the most definite and positive kind. It is clear from the preceding that the subjective principle alone is wholly inadequate as a support to human life either in the ethical or in the religious sphere. The subjective



principle in religion leads to mysticism which is empty, and in ethics it leads to formalism which is powerless. Formal or scientific ethics can only point the way; it cannot reenforce the will in its struggle against heavy odds. Mysticism has the sole advantage that it is immune from scientific attacks because it offers nothing definite against which the arrow of criticism may be directed. What man needs in his moral struggle is not merely rules of conduct, but power. This religion supplies. What man needs in his religious life is a definite goal. This ethics supplies. The kingdom of God in Christian teaching combines both ideals and unites them in the realization through faith of blessedness and redemption.

## 5. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

In the discussion of the unstable equilibrium of philosophy we omitted purposely the effort to define accurately and at length the relations between religion and philosophy. From the nature of religion it cannot be identified with philosophy, although of course religion implies and bears with it a general world-view. Philosophic systems exist which are not religious. Some of them formally reject the religious as a valid element in human life. This formal separation of philosophy from religion is due to diverse aims. To combine the various forms of reality in a logically coherent and self-consistent and comprehensive view of the uni-

verse, however completely carried through, never does in and of itself become religion. Philosophy as the attempt exhaustively to explain being might reach finality so that the last jot and tittle of the actual existent world came under its dominion, including the religious life and the religious experience itself, without thereby becoming religion. Correct explanations of religion can never constitute religion. But philosophy thus conceived does not exhaust knowledge. As a rational process merely philosophy excludes certain forms of experience and the attendant knowledge. Explanation, in intellectual terms of the mental and esthetic experience of Raphael in painting the Sistine Madonna, could not possibly include as a part of the explaining process the actual experience of the painter as he created the masterpiece. Religion as a fact in the soul of one man can never become a part of the rationalizing process in the mind of another. For, as we have seen, philosophy is the intellectual formulation of experience while religion is experience itself.

The difference between this form of experience and philosophy is seen further in the fact that religious experience has other elements besides the intellectual. The emotions and the will, the whole nature in fact, is included. We do not know God by thought alone. We know him by faith. Yet faith has a cognitive element; that is, knowledge in the intellectual sense. Knowledge then is a more

comprehensive term than science, logic, or philosophy, or all of these combined. Science gathers facts, logic manipulates them in a formal way for a particular purpose, and philosophy seeks to apply logic to the data in a comprehensive way. Yet none of these processes ever exhausts being as a whole. Nor can we say that esthetics, ethics, and religion are appreciations merely while science, logic, and philosophy are forms of knowledge. The former come into contact with the real just as truly as does science. The truth here and especially in religion can never be confined within the limits of a mechanical scheme of things. Yet mechanics cannot be truly held to be the only form of knowledge. We saw in a previous chapter how certain modern philosophers are forsaking rationalism and intellectualism, even as a philosophy, and adopting voluntarism. And yet experience cannot well take the place of thought about experience. Our formal explanations of what we experience and observe must continue to be valid even apart from experience itself. But these formal explanations by no means exhaust knowledge, and as life is fuller and richer than thought, religion cannot be identified with philosophy; and as knowledge has various forms in our varied experiences, no one form of knowledge is exhaustive of all the other forms. They do not conflict; they supplement each other.

It is thus clear that religion can with the utmost good-will bid the philosopher Godspeed in his

effort to reason out the facts of being. Likewise there is nothing in the nature of the case to prevent the philosopher from according to the religious man plenary rights in the religious sphere. For, be it observed, it is no longer a question of "thought" against "faith" or of "faith" against "thought," as if "thought" has a monopoly of knowledge. It is rather two forms of knowing which, within their respective domains, are entirely valid and legitimate. There is a vital point of contact, as we shall see, and under certain conditions religion blends with philosophy as we saw it blend with ethics. But the distinction between them holds.

There is a crucial question which we must notice next. As religion requires a world-view, just as philosophy requires one, shall philosophy dictate its world-views; or shall religion dictate to philosophy its world-views? The difference here is that religion requires a particular world-view; that is, some form of theism. Philosophy, on the other hand, manufactures world-views, valid from the point of view of philosophy, to an indefinite extent. Religion as such, then, must be very particular in its selection of a world-view, while philosophy as such can get along with almost any kind.

Now theism, which religion must have to remain religion, is a view which many modern men reject. But they reject it not because theism is a low view, but because it is a difficult view to maintain on scientific grounds. It breaks continuity. 'As

Höfding says, it "explains" nothing scientifically. Scientific explanation, however, is simply one kind of explanation. Let us remember that. Scientific explanation is causal and not necessarily teleological. Religious explanation is teleological and personal and not causal in the physical sense. Theism, which is a difficult, is also a very high view. To conceive God as personal and paternal and loving and holy and purposive, and as both immanent and transcendent is to supply man with the highest possible object of worship, the highest conceivable stimulus to faith, hope, and love. This is not denied. No alternative view of God or of the world-ground has been suggested that compares with the view *religiously* considered. It is a rational belief of the highest degree of cogency as a world-view. All the opposing views are constructed not primarily in the interest of religion at all, but in the interest of some principle which belongs to another sphere; usually it is physical continuity. From this arise the various forms of pantheism and monism, the forcible welding of being into a continuous chain, not to serve religion but to serve science, or a form of philosophic thought which works solely with a scientific criterion of reality.

Out of this situation arises the stress and strain of current theological and philosophical controversy. On one side men must needs recognize religion as a fundamental factor of human life. On the other they feel that they must remain loyal to science and

its principle of continuity. Endless compromises are being urged to-day. Our own view is that the way out is the recognition of the distinctiveness of the religious sphere, of religious truth, of religious experience, and of religious reality in the personal world over against physical continuity in the cosmos. Having clearly grasped this fact it is the duty of religion to insist upon its rights within its own sphere, including the right to construct a world-view based on the data of religion and for religious ends. A great many writers see this truth partially, but fail to grasp it in all its implications. They speak eloquently about religion and its place in human culture, and then reduce the world practically to naturalism and mechanism. Essentially the struggle in this type of mind is that between the interests of thought as against the interests of life. The moment we come into close quarters with this issue it becomes clear that the interests of life cannot survive the method of interpreting the world which makes continuity exclusive and exhaustive. A world in which physical continuity and scientific causation rules is a necessitarian world. Freedom in such a world is a mere name. In such a necessitarian world error is without meaning and sin is impossible. Moral responsibility, being a figment of the imagination, the whole ethical view of life vanishes, in any fundamental meaning of the word ethical.

Resort is sometimes had in this emergency to

other principles of explanation which at first sight seem to relieve the situation. One of these is the principle of evolutionism, of eternal becoming. Change is made the fundamental category of being. The world began in non-rational or irrational blind energy and gradually evolved intelligence and personality it is urged. But in such a world we must needs face the possibility that our human life, our ethical ideals, our social and religious sanctions, one and all, are a mere incident in a vaster movement. The restless sea of change which cast these things forth upon the shores of time may roll in upon them and engulf them all again, sweeping them back into oblivion. No cross section of reality at any stage of the on-going world can be taken as permanently typical of the outcome under this view. Indeed, there can be no definitive outcome in a world of endless change when the principle of change is made radical and exhaustive. It is only when it is combined with a static element of some kind that such an outcome is possible. Indeed, thought about ultimate things in such a world of change is the climax of folly. There is no criterion of thought at all except continuity, if even this is possible. A thorough-going evolutionism is the very desperation of thought, the despair of truth rather than its discovery or elucidation. Evolutionism, then, if radical and self-consistent, conserves no value, wins no goal, provides no satisfaction, ministers at no point whatever to the interests of life. In consequence

it is destitute of all power of human appeal. As it ignores life, so it will be ignored by life. The reader will, of course, understand that we are here referring not to evolution as the working hypothesis of science, but to evolutionism exalted into an exhaustive philosophy.

Again, resort is sometimes had to the principle of the divine immanence as a sufficient explanation of God's relations to the world. It is felt by many that in view of the scientific criterion of explanation, physical continuity, the only safe course for religion and theology is to assume a God who is identical in all respects, in his action, with the cosmos itself. There are accordingly various attempts to restate the truths of religion from this point of view. The result is always the same. So long as the effort is consistent with the fundamental principle, the truths of religion are left out, and so far as the truths of religion obtain real recognition the fundamental principle is violated. If God's action does not rise above the natural order, including man, then his activity is no better than that of the natural order. If it does rise above the natural order, then it is more than is implied in the principle of immanence. It is the plus in the case that is really significant for religion.

Moderns often oppose the principle of immanence to the exploded deistic view of God. In truth it is practically identical with deism if it is consistently held as the exclusive and sufficient explana-



tion of God's relations to the world. What advantage, in his relations to the world, is possessed by a God who is exhausted in the cosmos, over a God wholly apart from and above the cosmos? If the deistic God made a machine, and then sits aloft and watches it go, is not such a perpetually moving and evolving machine equal in its possibilities to a world in which an indwelling God never transcends the natural order? If God locks himself in nature, is it not equivalent to locking himself out? For be it remembered that it is the uniformity of nature under the operation of causation or physical continuity which constitutes the basis of the whole plea. If the divine energy resident in and as distinct from nature ever boils over, as it were, and produces something new or lifts nature to a new and higher stage, then evidently God transcends nature. If divine causation as distinct from or supplementary to physical causation ever gets in at any point, the principle of immanence is violated. It is curious that so many fail to see that this boiling over of nature and the lifting of nature to a higher plane contravenes the principle of the quantitative equivalence of cause and effect. The consequent cannot be stated in terms of the antecedent in the cosmic sense at all in such case. Thus the principle of explanation in the scientific sense also breaks down. Explanation to be scientific must remain horizontal. It can become vertical only by becoming personal. It does not avail

to convert nature into spirit merely and assert that nature is God. For so long as the physical or mechanical or causal action of nature remains unrelieved by the personal, such a spiritualized nature is identical with nature regarded as material. A new label does not change the nature of the thing. A uniform world with God locked in is exactly equivalent to a uniform world with God locked out. Religion calls for the interaction of God with the world of men in a way which transcends the normal even of the human life. It is to lift man above the world and redeem him from sin which constitutes the supreme function of religion.

The theologians of the divine immanence alone when they attempt to construe the idea of redemption invariably do one of two things. They either introduce the necessary plus of divine action which violates the principle of immanence, or else they adopt what is equivalent to naturalism as their fundamental view, which excludes redemption. The reader will, of course, understand that we are not opposing the conception of the immanence of God. We are only showing its insufficiency. The transcendence of God is the supplementary principle which is essential to a just view if the life of religion is to be preserved. The motive of those who stand for an exclusive principle of immanence is obvious. A God locked in the world seems to admit the free and full play of causation. These advocates are under the spell of physical continuity.

They erroneously imagine that religion must make terms with the principle and proceed at once to the compromise. They subject religion to an alien power which is rightly regarded as supreme in its own sphere, but which has no jurisdiction over religion. Here again the interests of life perish as the so-called interests of thought invade the territory of religion.

There is yet another way adopted by some to adjust the interests of life to those of thought. It is to recognize the imperative demands of life and especially of religion and admit their practical value, but deny their value as based on truth and reality. To many of these there is a pointblank contradiction between philosophy and man's practical interests. But the practical interests are imperative and cannot be ignored. Man needs morals and a social order. He cannot successfully command himself to be moral. He needs the religious reinforcement of morals. Man must have God and he must have religion. Truth, however, does not warrant belief in God. He is assumed therefore for practical purposes. Truth is independent of life, and has no relation to it whatever. It is wholly impersonal and non-human. A recent writer, after stating the case substantially as in the preceding sentences, says: "As to myself, I propose to compromise. My reason cannot abdicate her throne, nor can I agree to give up philosophy for the sake of life. . . On the other hand, since it is dangerous

to allow life to be absorbed by philosophy, dangerous from the social point of view, I propose to adopt for practical reasons the system of two truths—a philosophic truth independent of consequences, and a pragmatic truth, which shall be our social philosophy of the people, for the benefit of society.”<sup>9</sup>

Again, he deprecates the effort to make scientific and philosophic truth bend to human aspirations and thinks the means employed by the pragmatists to do this are unwarranted. “Above all, I do not believe they are the most worthy means, for they rest on a double philosophic error—the agreement of scientific truth with human aspirations, and the intellectual and social equality of individuals.”<sup>10</sup> This writer seems to confound scientific and philosophic truth, and he assumes that truth is in his possession in the philosophic sense, and that it certainly contradicts human aspirations. He fails to tell us what philosophic truth he holds so securely in his hands, or where we can find it by searching. We have already seen how inconclusive is the mere intellectual search for ultimate truth. This writer inveighs against the pragmatists for insisting that expediency and the will must be taken into account in all our knowing processes and holds that truth is independent of us and our needs. Our reason is our guide and our thought must be impersonal.

One is impressed in reading this controversy that

<sup>9</sup> A. Schinz, “Anti Pragmatism,” p. 250.

<sup>10</sup> A. Schinz, “Anti Pragmatism,” p. 252.

both parties are right and both are wrong. Professor Schinz assumes that reality, and as a consequence truth, is objective to and independent of us and that we can find it by means of the reason. The pragmatists assume that truth is only truth as we make it, as we take the data given to us and recast it in the human mold. They are never entirely clear on the point as to the nature of the objective world, but they are clear as to our "making" of truth in the way indicated. Now here is a needless conflict. Schinz cancels human aspirations in order to save truth and pragmatism cancels objective truth in order to save human aspirations, including religion. Schinz cuts man into two parts, reason and aspirations, an intellectual nature and a moral and religious nature. He says the objective world is congruous with his reason, with one part of man, and answers to it, but that it has no relation to the other part. Pragmatism also cuts man into two parts, the intellectual and the volitional, just as Schinz does, and asserts that being is congruous with the volitional part of man, but has no inherent relation to the intellectual. It is in both cases the monistic passion to exalt some one factor of being to the supreme place, to cancel half of the world in order to save the other half. If the intellectualist assumes an agreement between man's truth-loving and truth-seeking nature with the universe, why not assume a corresponding agreement between our aspirational and volitional life

with the same universe? And if the pragmatist assumes the congruity of the world and our volition, why not a like congruity of the world and our reason? A whole man and a whole world, and the reaction of the whole man against the whole world, this is the road to truth and the only road in the philosophic sense.

Here, however, comes an immediate reply. It is a dualism in man's own nature which gives all the trouble, it will be urged. Scientific explanation is the only real explanation. And this form of explanation has nothing in common with man's volitions and aspirations, but pertains solely to his reason. The forms of explanation are not convertible the one into the other. Our own reply is that reality has more than one dimension, that explanation may be in terms of personality and teleology and will as truly as in terms of continuity; that there is no necessity for setting up these two forms of explanation as opposed to each other, or to put truth on one side and life on the other and assume that there is a truceless war between them. It is the truth of life on one side and the truth of nature on the other. The personal world has its own categories, and norms and concepts, and is as orderly and systematic in its connections as the cosmos.

But here again it is objected: "You never get God with all your reasonings and all your forms of reality. You do not discover God and you fail to

deduce him." Here again our own reply is at hand: We experience God. He becomes actual to us in religious experience. This is the point at which we find the empirical basis for religious philosophy and at which the problem of Kant and therewith the crucial problem of modern philosophy finds solution. Kant distinguished between the phenomenal and the noumenal world. We know only phenomena. We cannot know what is behind phenomena. So he argued. Our practical interests, however, demand God, and so through the practical reason Kant restored the God whom he had lost through the theoretical reason. No one has ever improved much over Kant's way of stating the case so long as religious experience is left out of account. For Kant's method is purely rational, not experiential. When the data involved are manipulated by the reason alone we never get over beyond phenomena into the world of noumena, we never solve the problem of thought and life, of intellect on the one hand and of volition and aspiration on the other. In religious experience, on the other hand, we pass over to the world of noumena. The divine comes to us. Thus the circle of personal relationships is completed by fellowship with the highest person, God, and the kingdom of the Spirit is established on incontrovertible fact.

I am quite aware that many will be disposed to turn away from this conclusion. To them it will seem a forced and unreal solution of the standing

riddle of the contradiction between thought and life. Our reply is that it is in the name of reality that we urge it as the solution. A scientific age has joined Christianity in preaching the doctrine of sincerity and in inveighing against the unreal. It tells us that the fact basis is the only basis for human hope and human aspiration. Now the religious life and experience are as real to men who have it as breathing or walking. They can no more get away from that religious world than they can from the external world of nature. To such men it is the height of absurdity for the scientific man to urge them to be genuine and cling to the real and at the same time propose a religious object which is as indeterminate and illusory as a morning cloud. Yet this is going on all about us. A religious agnosticism is joined with exhortations to religious devotion. Eloquent tributes to religion are coupled with a definition of it in terms of Ritschlianism or of mysticism. Assertions of the primary and fundamental place of religion in man's life are accompanied by expositions of it which leave it no power wherewith to grip man. The love of truth and of reality is preached as the supreme virtue, and the high ethical quality of the scientific spirit is eulogized chiefly because science cannot endure shams of any kind.

In the next breath a view of religion may be urged which makes of it a mere functional or emotional make-believe, in which man piously imagines



a God whom he never finds, who in no sense is real, a God who is manufactured subjectively by the worshiper and worshiped as if he were actually existent in order to aid man in his struggle for existence. We insist that such fictitious and illusory forms of religion are all in vain and really an affront to the religious life of man. The philosophers of religion who are dealing out this sort of religious theory to us will have to give up their "scientific love of reality" or else give up their theory of religion. The two are in deadly conflict. In other words, religion must become real or it must cease to be. We know God or we do not know him. He is real to our experience or he is not. He never becomes more than one of a number of possible deductions until he becomes actual in religious experience itself. One can understand the logical self-consistency at least of a man like Höfding, who contemplates with serenity the passing of all distinctively religious "values" as such; that is, the extinction of religion by science. But one cannot grant the self-consistency of men who accept Höfding's premises and try to argue against his conclusions.

As we have seen, it is the monistic passion which demands the exclusion of the interests of life for the sake of those of thought. A personal and a physical criterion of truth it cannot tolerate. Yet scientifically and philosophically all monisms in some degree come short of demonstration. At the same

time our Christian theism yields a unity of the most significant kind. It does not succeed in converting mind into matter nor matter into mind. It does not achieve any sort of locked-together unity of all existence. But as a matter of fact no other theory does these things. There is no clearly defined and clearly recognized scientific and empirical foundation for any of the monisms which are current. These monisms pass out of the personal sphere into the physical and adopt a physical criterion of reality and then theoretically attempt to reconstruct all being with this physical conception of substance and of continuity.

Our Christian theism, on the contrary, leaves the dualism of fact as we find it, and denies that we are compelled to formulate any self-consistent monism which cancels the interests of life and personality. But our theism does exhibit a bond of unity for all the forms of human life and culture. It finds a vital point of contact with physical science in its empirical basis of Christian experience wherein the soul ceases to speculate about God and finds him. Its point of contact with psychology is seen in the psychological laws which govern man's religious life, and if Professor James is correct, in the subconscious mind as the medium through which the divine and regenerating influences reach the soul. Our Christian theism again is vitally related to ethics in that Christian ethics is the expression on the human side of the meaning of

religion; and to practical endeavor in its divine reenforcement of the will for the performance of duty. And finally its service to philosophy is seen in its solution of the riddle of the conflict between the theoretical and practical reason on the empirical basis of experience itself. In religious experience we are not dealing with hypothetical atoms or molecules or ions. We are dealing in the most direct and vital manner with God himself.

Besides the above, religion seeks and promotes a higher form of unity, viz., that of a moral and spiritual kingdom. Moral and religious "monism" is of far greater importance to the race than intellectual or physical. It seems strange that in our pronouncedly Christian age men should resort to a form of conception and of knowledge on a non-moral and non-religious plane as the ultimate ideal of truth. Current forms of monism in many instances do not have any essential regard in and of themselves for our moral and spiritual welfare. These may be and often are gathered up into the monistic systems of Christian thinkers with more or less consistency. And as purely intellectual constructions, ethical monism and personalism, which are in large part identical, are the best attempts yet made to solve the problems of philosophy. Our own view is that monism of substance implying physical continuity as the criterion of truth and reality, however spiritual the conception of substance is held to be, is not the highest form of the demand

for unity. We believe we may forego the solution of the problems of mind and matter for the present. We must discover the solution, not force it. Our supreme need lies in the personal realm where the unity and harmony of man with God and of man with man in a redeemed society is to be realized. It is far more important to the world to know that the universe is personal than to know that in the monistic sense it is one. In short, we propose to make the interests of life and the facts of experience the basis of philosophy.

We return to philosophy then through religion. Science recognizes two objects, the observer and the world observed, the self and the physical universe. By its own methods of verification science discovers truth. Philosophy applies the laws of logic to the data supplied by science, selecting such part or parts as may seem to be most significant and employs this to explain the remainder. It may select any known principle from matter up to personality. From this it deduces a general world-view. The possible world-views are indefinitely varied and inconclusive as rational deductions merely. This variety and non-finality of world-views are due to the nature of logic. You cannot get out of the premises more than you put into them. You fill the logical basket yourself. Then you select one of the objects you have placed in it to explain the rest. If you have only the human self and the physical world in the basket you can only

take out one or the other of these. If you do you violate your logic. Now religion adds a third object to the two named. In religion we obtain God, not as a deduction from reason as in the logical process, but as a fact given to us actually in experience. We know him, and thus know what Kant declared could not be known, viz., the reality behind the world of phenomena.

With this addition to our stock of knowledge we frame our general world-view, confining it to the elements actually given to us, and avoiding forms of theory which ignore the breaks in our knowledge. We do not know God in religious experience as identical with ourselves or the universe, but we know him as real and as active in us for our redemption, and we know him as personal in Christian experience; that is, in the form in which Christ has revealed him. We may call the resultant view Christian theism. Or, if we have respect to the deep demand of the reason for unity of thought and for a unified world, we may call it critical personalism. This means that personality is the highest object we know, since we find it in ourselves and in God. Thus we conclude it is the key to all the riddles of knowledge, and all the discords and contradictions and dualisms of the world. But we hold ourselves under restraint. We remember that although we have found the key we have not yet found the keyhole in all the doors of the world. For religion we have ample knowledge. For reconcilia-

tion of some other forms of disharmony, some problems of reason, we patiently wait and earnestly labor.

Now all the interests of human freedom are bound up with the interests of life and of the kingdom of God announced by Jesus Christ. That kingdom rests upon the religious and personal interpretations of the universe. Only with such an interpretation can the interests of the human individual survive. An impersonal universe augurs ill for the personal life of man. In such a system of things he finds no permanent basis for personality. He never really escapes from the cosmos into real personality. His apparent personality is illusion. A non-personal universe provides no permanent abode for our human personality and yet many scientific men inveigh against Christianity and theism in the interest of individuality and personality. Thereby they saw off the limbs on which they sit. If the men who inveigh against Jesus and his teaching would look more deeply, they would discover that with all his authoritativeness he is the supreme emancipator of the human spirit, in that for the first time in the world's history he established a world-view in which personality came at last to all its rights. He revealed the eternal foundations of our personal life in a personal and ever-living God. Nothing can well be more inconsistent than a clamor for liberty of thought or action coupled with a non-personal conception of

ultimate reality. In such a necessitarian world personality and freedom and individualism are without serious significance. It was Jesus who first gave the true basis to human freedom. This freedom comes through religion. Man's highest freedom never comes otherwise. Religion has been called the self-affirmation of the soul. It is the conquest of the world within and without in so far as the world is opposed to the ends and interests of the soul. It is thus the highest assertion of freedom and of personality.

To find God is to escape reabsorption in the cosmos, and every other form of defeat which the material universe can bring upon us. Through religion indeed we first attain full personality. Prior to the religious life we are not full-grown persons. Through religion we attain not only freedom, but also truth. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Our free attainment of truth is our highest privilege as men. And yet it is the validity of truth freely achieved and attained which constitutes the basis of authority. If human experience fails to find truth in its free endeavor, there can be no authority. But man's freedom implies God's freedom as well, and the religious assumption and experience imply the free interaction of God and man, and this free interaction means the possibility of divine revelation as well as of free human discovery of truth. Indeed, as we shall see, God's method is so to present truth

that men grasp it and appropriate it for their spiritual regeneration and growth. This does not mean that all the facts which revelation brings to us are fully rationalized by the human intellect, so that there is no unknown remainder. This is never true of any fact, whether revealed or not. But God's revelation to us does mean that our experience religiously assimilates revealed truth and it becomes valid for us not as propositions imposed by sheer divine authority, but is recognized by us as the answer to our deepest needs and congruous with our highest aspirations.

In the light of the preceding conclusions it is clear that the reassertion of the religious interpretation of the world is part and parcel of the reassertion of human freedom. One of the chief fallacies of current anti-religious thought is that religion is a source of bondage. As a result many are trying to square their theology with a form of tyranny which is only less tolerable than that of the old persecuting States because it employs intellectual rather than political means for enforcing its decrees. An impersonal and indifferent universe conceived as a principle deduced from the physical order stifles the nature of man and quenches human hope. It paralyzes his being and conquers his upward strivings at the most vital point. It pleads the name of science without warrant and reduces life and being to a single dimension. It thunders against man's religious instincts in a manner which has terrified



many and has led them to abandon prayer as futile, and to reduce religion to a form of ethical culture merely. It has led some religious teachers to frame theoretical interpretations of religion in which nothing is left but a trace or a semblance, and to confuse the religious with other values until the distinctions disappear altogether. Some are preaching the funeral of theology, which, if it were really in order, would imply the end of human hope, since theology is the inevitable outcome of the religious life itself. This darkness and confusion bewilders the men who are without interest in the intellectual side of the problem, but who have a tragic and terrible interest in the ministry of religion to human struggles and achievement; while for those in whom the religious need has slowly surrendered to the other, which is intellectual merely, nothing is left but the din of a conflict which can never end so long as men insist on exalting causality above personality. Human freedom, in other words, can never be maintained on the basis of an absolute and exclusive principle which by its very definition cancels freedom.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

Psychology deals with man's mental life and defines the laws of its action. Religious experience does not interrupt the work of psychology. The stream of consciousness simply becomes more complex and interesting. The data or facts observed are subjective it is true; but this is true also of ordinary psychology. The psychology of religion is a distinct branch of inquiry and considerable progress has already been made therein.

What is knowledge? The following points enter into the definition of knowledge: (1) That which is self-evident in the nature of reason. (2) That which is immediately given in experience. (3) That which is cogently inferred from the given.<sup>1</sup> It is clear then that the scientific method is not the only way of acquiring knowledge. Rational belief as distinguished from knowledge is a conviction based on reasons which lend support but do not compel the conclusion.

Let us ask now, what are the elements in religious experience which warrant us in claiming that in it we have real knowledge? The following assertions

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bowne, "Theory of Thought and Knowledge," p. 368.

may be made of the reality which we know in Christian experience. (1) In it we know a power not ourselves, a power from without acting upon our spirits. (2) We know that this power is spiritual as distinguished from material. It has none of the marks of the material realities we know, and it acts upon our spirits. (3) This power which thus acts upon us from without is redemptive. It achieves in and for us a salvation which Professor James has described as "lyric" joy and a sense of deliverance, and which we know by experience as moral transformation. We may bring to bear upon these contents of the religious consciousness any and all tests of truth and reality, and in so far as they are applicable at all they do not and cannot shake the conviction of their subject that they are elements of real knowledge. One of these tests is to strive to think the opposite. This the believer cannot do. Another is conceivability. Of course the denial is to the man who has the experience inconceivable. Another is demonstrability. Here we have not that which can be demonstrated, but that which is immediately known. We may apply Descartes' criterion of truth; since the data are immediately given in consciousness. So also Huxley's, since it is so clear and distinct it cannot be doubted. In particular does this knowledge conform to requirement number two in the tests given above.

Several points need emphasis here. One is that this form of knowledge is empirical in character,

not deduced by abstract reasoning. In this sense it is scientific, and this distinguishes it from all mere speculative philosophies of religion. The second point is that as a form of knowledge it is not explanation in terms of physical continuity, but in terms of personal interaction. It is not merely subjective, because the religious consciousness knows an object outside itself as acting upon it in a particular way. Further, we have not here an ideal which we impose upon the world and seek to make real. We have rather a power not ourselves which makes for righteousness and which acts within the soul of man.

From the above it is clear that continuity in the scientific sense is not the only form of explanation or test of truth. It is rather a highly specialized and technical method of investigation or form of knowledge which serves a practical end in scientific research, but does not apply in the personal realm. Personal interaction is a source of knowledge as truly as the transformation of energy.

The question now arises how much is really included in the above form of knowledge which answers the ends of the religious life? Can we assert that we know the object in religious experience as God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth? Professor James concludes, in his "Varieties of Religious Experience," that we cannot know the nature of this object in religious experience; that in the strict sense we must draw the line and say that

beyond the assertion of a supernatural power we have only overbeliefs. But even so we do have knowledge in religious experience. And this is the sole point of our present claim. How much knowledge is another question. It is true we carry on our intercourse with our religious object in personal terms, and without this form of intercourse religion would be meaningless. In this experience apart from the Christian revelation we do not obtain a knowledge of the full outline of the character of God as a loving Father. To the subject of the experience indeed these truths about God are evident, but they are based on Christ's revelation of God and cannot be urged as the Christian urges the facts of his religious consciousness otherwise. An opponent might conceivably and in fact does often actually deny that this religious object is personal and paternal. This possibility of denial we freely admit. Nevertheless it remains true that we have in religious experience actual knowledge of an order of reality, a form of existence which is totally diverse from physical nature, an order of reality objective to man yet capable of interacting with his spirit and of achieving in and through him definite moral and spiritual results. This establishes our claim that religion is knowledge and not merely belief. This fact supplies an empirical warrant for the personal and spiritual kingdom and the personal and spiritual form of truth and reality to those who are dominated by the scientific ideal.

Now it is this distinctly experiential and empirical character of the Christian religion which is one of its chief characteristics. It is this which gives to it stability as a form of faith, among all classes from the lowest to the highest. So long as religion is an ideal or value merely which we impose upon life, so long as it is based merely upon philosophic and intellectualistic theories of the world and its causes, it is subject to all the fluctuations and uncertainties which we have found incident to the unstable equilibrium of philosophy. It remains then a subject for academic debate with very slight if any power to grip men in the battle of life. To become mighty as a real energy in man religion must be known and felt to be part and parcel of the real and the true. Its texture must be seen and known as the same substantial stuff with other forms of reality and not as a changing mist of desire made iridescent by the glamour of human reason. It is this quality and sense of the real in the Christian life which imparts to the Christian his deep and abiding conviction, which gives to him indeed the scientist's loyalty and devotion to the real. To deny would be to him the renunciation of the most real factors of his inner experience and would involve him in a hopeless agnosticism as to his own capacity to know at all.

We are not forgetting, of course, that in the foregoing account of the contents of the Christian experience much has been omitted which, from

the Christian standpoint, should be included. Due account will be taken of this element when we come to discuss the authority of Jesus Christ. We remark here by way of anticipation that it is Christ's revelation which has fixed the form of the experience. It is he who has first of all enabled the world to find itself religiously, and especially is it he who created in man the capacity for assimilating truth religiously, and who has thus added to man's intellectual powers a vast area of capacity for obtaining a knowledge of ultimate truth.

Meantime we are content with the fact that we have in Christian experience as immediately given distinct elements of knowledge. Science would not be able to gainsay the claim that it is real knowledge on the ground that in that immediately given experience we have not a knowledge of God as personal and paternal. For it is the peculiar mark of the scientific form of knowledge that it omits explanation in terms of the ultimate and final, and confines itself to the phenomenal. Scientifically it is knowledge primarily because it does so confine itself. The scientific objection then that the contents of the Christian consciousness are not knowledge, because not exhaustive knowledge of the object, is a complete surrender of the fundamental scientific assumptions. Science recognizes energy in nature and expressly designates the laws of its action as knowledge without any reference to the ultimate nature of energy. In like manner, from the scien-

tific standpoint the energy which in religion comes to man from without and lifts him to a new moral, emotional, and intellectual plane, transforming him into a new man, may be observed and the laws of its action formulated as knowledge. This is often overlooked by those who dispute that in religious experience we have knowledge. They smuggle in non-scientific assumptions and definitions of knowledge and then offer scientific objections to the religious form of knowledge.

In the estimation of the present writer no task is so significant and imperative in dealing with the subject of religion as that of defining and fixing clearly for thought the nature and limits of knowledge as given in religious experience. It is this which will solve most of the riddles which perplex men regarding the relations between science and religion.

The most obvious objection to the foregoing account of religious knowledge will be its non-mathematical or its non-exact character. Scientific men will urge that alone as knowledge which may be formulated in exact laws like the laws of motion, of chemistry and gravitation and similar laws of physical science. We reply that such a definition of knowledge is arbitrary in the extreme. The definitions of knowledge previously given do not require it, and to insist upon confining knowledge to such formulations is absurd. For consider what it implies. It implies that the only reality which exists



is that of the mechanical order. The only sphere in which mathematical exactness in the formulation of laws is possible is physical nature. If the real is to be found here only, and if the truth is solely the statement in mathematical terms of the laws of this sphere, what becomes of the higher personal realm? Is it the realm of the non-real and is truth impossible of attainment there? Are the sciences of economics and sociology, of psychology, of politics and civilization—are all these pseudo-sciences? Is there no apprehension of the real in these spheres?

To ask the question is to answer it. Precisely as we rise in the scale of being do we pass from the possibility of stating truth in mechanical terms. In biology, for example, we cease to deal with mathematical and mechanical truth. Science can predict an eclipse of the sun to the minute, but when has science predicted in the same sense the variation of species? In the human sphere the true and the real become more intensely and richly true and real in proportion as the non-mechanical and non-physical forces have play. Here it is the incalculable element which gives interest and value to life. The vision of Plato, the moral heroism of Socrates, the renunciation of Buddha, all these belong to a sphere of the real far above the mechanical. So in the sphere of religion. In the personal and religious realm it is not the absence of truth, but its presence; not the deficiency of the real, but its overflowing abundance which prevents our stating it as we state

the truths of physical nature. We set forth in doctrines our interpretations of our religious life and presently we discover that that life is richer and fuller than we had supposed and we must needs restate them. These restatements are not symbolic guesses at the nature of religion, nor the annulment of all the past by some sudden scientific or philosophic insight, as the superficial so often imagine. They are simply the marks of man's growth toward the divine ideal and the full comprehension of divine truth. Religion has no atoms, nor molecules, nor ions; we have not there the uniformity of physical nature and the law of physical causation; we cannot measure by inches or feet, by pounds or mathematical units. Sometimes men express a longing for a conceptual apparatus, standards of reality and value in religion analogous to those of physical science. The desire is a wise one with a proper understanding of the nature of religious truth, but it is as unwise as it is hopeless if mechanical and mathematical exactness is implied. For such an apparatus would destroy religion at a single blow if rigorously applied.

The man whose ideals of truth are those of physical science merely will of course shrink from a religious and personal criterion of truth. Its apparent indefiniteness will seem to him to involve a very great hazard to the very ideal of truth. It will seem to him to open the way for all kinds of superstitions and vagaries, a letting-down of the

bars to every kind of emotional and speculative wild beast to destroy the tender plants in the scientific garden. His fear, however, shows how far an arbitrary and over-narrow conception of truth has caused him to drift away from human life and interest. Only by the complete cancelation of the higher interests of the race and the higher forms of reality can his program for discovering the truth be carried out. We admit the hazard of course. Life itself is a marvelous adventure under the eye of God, the Christian believes. Yet a part of our task is to achieve a knowledge of the real and a holy character. The hazard involved in handling truth in the non-mechanical and personal sense is the price we must pay for the privilege of living the life of men. When the dust first stood erect in the form of man the most dramatic event in the history of the cosmos took place. For then for the first time freedom appeared, and it is the presence of freedom which gives rise to the new order of reality, the new form of truth, and the hazard of existence. If, therefore, we insist on defining truth in merely mechanical and physical terms, we throw away our birthright of freedom. The religious form of truth is intimately bound up with the interests of freedom itself.

Another point needs to be noted here, and that is the relation of logic to religious truth. Is science logical while religion is illogical? Here the distinction is without pertinency. The difference

between religion and science is not that one is logical while the other is not. Both are spheres for the application of logic. Physical continuity and personal interaction are the members of the scientific and religious antithesis. The laws of identity and contradiction, and all laws of syllogistic reasoning are applicable in both spheres. The grist which we pour into the logical mill in the two cases is different, but the grinding process is the same. The logical, however, is simply a single phase of both kinds of reality, and there is always more in the reality than the logic gets out. The most important thing is the manner of adjusting ourselves to reality or handling it. Therein is the distinction between logic and life. We aim first to get facts. Life and experience yield facts. We then reason about the facts. It is fallacious to substitute logic for experience or experience for logic. Logic, which is simply a formal science, may be carried on in midair with perfect consistency. It can flourish in a vacuum, as it were, because it does not need the real as material to work on. We may reason as cogently about non-existent as about real things. Hence the interests of truth demand the life adjustment, or in a word, the experience of the real, in religion as elsewhere, far more than they demand logical consistency. We know the real, we have truth, long before we know logic. There are all stages of the apprehension of the real, from the infant consciousness to which the world is a "vast confusion," all the way up to the

trained thinker, to whom definite concepts of fixed meaning become instruments of syllogistic reasoning. It is folly to assert that none of these apprehensions of the real is knowledge save the final concepts of fixed meaning. For these even are nearly all in a state of growth and change from less to more. The preceding and less definite stages, therefore, cannot be read out of court as forms of knowledge. They are simply imperfect stages of knowledge.

We have spoken of the hazard of a non-mathematical and non-exact formulation of truth, and we have pointed out that freedom is vitally related to this peculiarity of religious truth. A very little consideration shows this. Suppose religious truth were mathematically formulated and the nature and limits and qualities and activities of God were stated with all the exactness and mathematical clearness of the law of gravitation. It would imply that man has comprehended God as well as apprehended him, that he has learned God as he has learned the multiplication table. It would imply further that growth toward a more adequate conception of God was impossible. Such formulations of the doctrine of God man's free spirit would certainly reject. And yet it is nothing less than this sort of tyranny which is implicit in the modern demand that theology and religion be "scientific" in the rigidly mathematical sense—scientific that is, in the sense in which research into physical nature is scientific.

A God which could be mathematically defined would thereby cease to be a God at all. His divine attributes would vanish, and the man who insisted on such a demonstration of God would instantly repudiate him as God when so demonstrated. So also, if our human and personal world could be reduced to the plane of causation, it would thereby become a necessitarian world, and all the glow and inspiration of life would vanish for men who have been inwardly conscious of freedom. It is clear, therefore, that the non-mathematical nature of religious truth is the best safeguard to our intellect and our conscience, the real guarantee, in other words, of the free development of personality. The fascination which Christ has for the men who love freedom has been the consciousness that while he enables men to find the true religious object, he nevertheless leaves them utterly free to formulate their interpretations of his truth. Hence the non-finality of humanly devised creeds. With each new influx of life from him his people grasp some new aspect of its meaning and slowly round out the body of vitalized truth. In him it was all contained to begin with. He is the religious horizon of men, and as men rise in the scale of religious experience and comprehension of religious truth, the horizon does not disappear; it simply becomes more extended. Men may as soon transcend all horizon as abolish Christ as the standard and guide in religious experience.

It is often claimed that scientific truth is less esoteric and individual and private than religious truth, and hence has greater claim to the adherence of men generally. This is a glaring error. The number of men who personally verify scientific conclusions is incomparably smaller than the number who verify religious truths in experience. In a sense all religious men are experts, while uncounted millions accept the results and enjoy the fruits of science who have no first-hand knowledge of science at all. Closely akin to this is the claim that religion employs authority while science employs freedom. Exactly the reverse is true. Or rather we should say both employ authority, but science in a far more universal way than religion. How many astronomers have for themselves verified all the laws of astronomy; how many chemists and physicians those pertaining to their callings? Indeed, the verified results of science are proclaimed universally on the authority of expert knowledge, while the religious call invites men to test for themselves the reality and truth of the religious life.

We have spoken of the non-mathematical character of religious truth. Is it to be inferred then that religious experience is wholly indeterminate? By no means. The factors of knowledge in that experience have already shown this clearly, and they are susceptible of analysis beyond the points previously indicated. These were—that we know in religious experience a power not ourselves, which is spiritual

and which acts upon us redemptively. How much further may we discern elements of cognition here? First, we reply that in Christian experience the ethical factors call for discrimination into forms of knowledge. We know ourselves as distinct from the Object. This marks off the experience from mysticism, whose ideal is absorption in the Absolute and the merging of all into pure feeling. Secondly, we are moved by a sense of wrongness in ourselves coupled with a sense of weakness and helplessness. Thirdly, there is the ideal of righteousness distinctly grasped by the seeking soul. Fourthly, there is the attitude of conscious penitence, a renunciation of evil. Fifthly, there is a conscious adjustment to the higher power under a sense of guilt and need. Sixthly, there is the act of surrender and of faith. This from our side. From the side of the Object there is, first, the definite response; secondly, the inward peace and sense of fellowship; thirdly, the reenforced will; fourthly, the morally transformed life. Of course these are ethical and spiritual factors of experience, but they are none the less forms of knowledge as well. They all involve definite conceptions with fixed meanings and require the exercise of the powers of analysis and discrimination. The frequent renewal of the act of adjustment, the repeated response of the Object and the law of our interaction with it steadily verifies the first truths of our experience under the stress and strain of life. The will is a fundamental factor in



this form of experience, and the knowledge which arises is conditioned by this action of the will.

The distinction between this form of religious knowledge and mysticism will be clear from the foregoing. There is a mystical element in Christian experience, but mysticism in the historical sense is pantheistic and non-personal. It aims explicitly to cancel the distinction between God and man by absorption of the finite in the infinite, and knowledge ceases and pure feeling takes its place. Mysticism thus supplies no motive to conduct; indeed, it tends to a paralysis of ethical endeavor and the effort to achieve personality in the full sense. Christian experience is carried on in very definite conceptual forms, while mysticism expressly avoids them. Christian experience is controlled by definite ethical and religious ends for practical life and these are very definitely held. Mysticism flees from the world of the practical for the life of contemplation. The interaction of God and man in Christian experience gives to human personality a distinctness, imparts to human self-consciousness a clearness, and lifts man to a conviction of triumph and hope and immortality not to be attained in such measure in any other way.

We may pause for a moment at this point to indicate precisely how this knowledge obtained by us in religious experience is related to the sort of knowledge given in the application of the principle of causation in nature. It is not necessary to

emphasize further the fact that in our Christian experience we are dealing with data of consciousness immediately given. As to the principle of causation, we find in Christian experience that it continues to operate, but not in the physical sense. In the latter it is properly defined as transformation of energy or the quantitative equivalence of antecedent and consequent. In religious experience, on the contrary, there is a cause at work and there are effects in our consciousness very marked and distinct. But here there is no transformation of energy in the physical sense. It is not transformation, but interaction of distinct things. Indeed, it is this distinctness between ourselves and the power coming to us which imparts the chief significance and the chief elements of value to the experience itself. Here the Christian experience is in marked contrast to mysticism and pantheism. In these the act of union with the Object lowers religion to the physical plane by merging human personality in that object. That is to say, a principle analogous to that of physical continuity is substituted for personal interaction. Personality and freedom are thus inevitably quenched in these systems and the kingdom of God lapses into the cosmic movement and loses its significance. Causation, therefore, must be defined more broadly than in the sense of physical continuity. Knowledge may and does arise, and may be stated in another causal form than that which physical science would make so exclusive as

a criterion of explanation. The interaction of human persons is the most indisputable form of knowledge we possess apart from the contents of our own consciousness. Yet these other personalities which act upon us are, in their real essence, wholly hid from our senses. The theoretical and speculative difficulties all exist in their case as in the case of the divine personality. Our knowledge of them, however, rests not on theoretical but upon empirical grounds, our actual experience of interaction with them, just as in our fellowship with God.

What we have described as knowledge in religion has been of set purpose limited to what lies clearly and incontrovertibly in the field of consciousness. This because our aim has been to keep our claim strictly within limits which on no ground whatsoever can be gainsaid, limits which yield knowledge in every sense of the word save that of mathematically exact truth. There are, however, several further statements to be made. One is that the knowledge which religious experience yields is not knowledge in the intellectual as distinguished from the moral and spiritual sense, nor moral and spiritual in contradistinction to intellectual knowledge. The New Testament, and especially the apostle John, speaks of the knowledge of God as "life eternal."<sup>2</sup> This is sometimes explained as if it were not cognition at all, but simply a form of moral experience. But this is not the thought of John. He always

<sup>2</sup> John 17 : 3.

deals with man's nature as a unit. With him intellect and will, all the parts of our nature, act together. Both elements of experience are present in the thought of John when he defines eternal life as the knowledge of God. It is knowledge in the full sense due to our total reaction upon God. Voluntarism does not exclude intellectualism. The will and the reason act as a unit in our grasp of religious truth.

Again what we have described as knowledge does not take into account all that enters into the act of knowledge, even as thus described. We do actually know God as personal and as Father in this experience. But here enters the element of revelation through Jesus Christ. In Matthew 11:27 and Luke 10:22 we have Christ's statement of his relation to the knowledge of the Father. He mediates that knowledge to us and he alone. We do not obtain it without him. Indeed, all the knowledge we have previously described is part and parcel of the process involved in our experience when we come to know God through Jesus Christ. It is not, therefore, as if we were arbitrarily cutting the experience into two unrelated parts and claiming one part as knowledge and the remainder as something else, say rational belief. On the contrary, as Christians we claim that we do have here more than knowledge of a power not ourselves which works in us and produces a regenerate life. The reader will understand our point of view if he keeps in mind the

fact that our aim has been to show the actuality of the knowledge in Christian experience. To show this we may for purposes of analysis look at a part of that experience and disregard momentarily the remainder. In experience we get the knowledge as a whole, but for purposes of thought we may divide it for the sake of clearness and for argument.

At once the question arises: What is the necessity for thus looking at a part of the experience and treating that as a thing by itself? Why not retain all the experience and deal with it as a whole? The reply is that we do retain it as a whole in our final view, and we agree that we may not permanently bisect religious experience. But we must add that it is not we who run the line through religious experience, but the scientific student of experience. Prof. William James, in his "Varieties of Religious Experience," does exactly this. He goes with the Christian all the way in recognizing the presence of a supernatural transforming power in Christian experience, producing the effects previously outlined. But beyond this he will not go. When we begin to assign definite causes we are, he thinks, in the realm of overbeliefs. In the minimum of knowledge, therefore, which we have claimed in religious experience, we have had in view the scientific observer of religious experience and not the Christian himself. The division of experience was for purposes of argument and with the aim of making our point perfectly clear by claiming the minimum rather

than the maximum of knowledge. We have also had in view another result, viz., to show that the scientific criterion which applies in physical nature cannot be applied in any thorough-going way in religious experience. The absence of mathematically exact modes of defining the nature of the power acting upon us excludes this form of scientific explanation. The Christian knows God, the Father, through Jesus Christ. The scientific observer of religious experience takes the data of the Christian consciousness and applies the law of parsimony, and fails to obtain the full Christian conclusion.

Now this last point is of the utmost importance for our discussion of authority. For we are dealing in this work, in very large measure, with those who deny that Christianity is a religion of authority and who yet seek to cling to Jesus Christ and his gospel. The full meaning of this statement will appear farther on.

It will aid us in clarifying the idea of religious knowledge we here advocate if we observe its relations to other forms of modern thought. What is known as the sensation theory of knowledge, according to which all our ideas are mere sense-perceptions of the external world, of course excludes the view of religious knowledge we advocate. Later psychology and philosophy have repudiated sensationalism. The self-activity of the mind, its power to unify the data supplied by the senses, and in general its own originaive activities, have been

clearly and fully recognized. The denial of man's capacity for a knowledge of God in religious experience goes with the sensation theory of knowledge.

As is well known, Descartes inaugurated the modern appeal to consciousness as the source of our most certain knowledge. His famous *cogito, ergo sum* was a purely formal way of announcing an immediately given fact. Descartes, however, was controlled by the mathematical view of the nature of truth and failed to perceive the direct and fundamental relation of the consciousness to truth in the religious sphere. His statement of the ontological argument for God's existence was philosophic and rationalistic rather than empirical and experiential in character. Nevertheless his emphasis of consciousness as the starting-point in the quest for truth was a momentous advance in the progress of thought.

In his emphasis upon the practical reason Kant exhibited an insight and expounded a form of theory which has powerfully influenced all subsequent thought. But with him also the method of approach to religious truth was philosophic and rationalistic rather than empirical and experiential. In his separation of the noumenal from the phenomenal worlds he laid the foundation for agnosticism. He also opened the way for idealism in his doctrine of the categories of the understanding and the nature of reason. In his theoretical dualism Kant

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is thus the most striking exponent in modern times of the effort to reconcile the two points of view, the religious and the intellectual. His failure was due to the absence in his thinking of the empirical religious element. To separate man's nature into non-communicating compartments and assign religion to one and knowledge or truth to the other was predestined to fail from the beginning. To make the "noumenal" world inaccessible to man, that is, to remove the Object in religion beyond our reach, is to undermine religion. Abstractions about God and postulates about religion do not serve the ends of religion. Religious experience, as we have pointed out, supplies the missing link in the theoretical attempt of men to harmonize the noumenal and phenomenal worlds. The truth then is not as Kant tried to show that there is a phenomenal world which we may know and another world of "things in themselves" which we cannot know. The truth is rather that there is a world of phenomena which we know in one way, and a world of noumena which we know in another way. This is only another way of saying that bare rationalism cannot solve the problem of being; and this in turn means that the permanent divorce of philosophy from religious experience means the indefinite postponement of the solution of the philosophic problem. The higher culture of the race henceforth must make room for the religious life or else doom itself to a permanent arrest of development.



Schleiermacher saw clearly that the intellectualistic method of approach could not solve the problems of the soul or answer the ends of life. He exalted the feeling of dependence upon the Absolute to the first place in religion. But his theory was essentially pantheistic in principle, although not completely so in his own doctrinal exposition of it. His half-loaf, however, was better than Hegel's rigorous exposition of the Absolute wherein the interests of life were almost completely sacrificed. The need was for a union of the emotional and voluntaristic along with the rational factors of knowledge; that is to say, the reaction of the whole of our nature upon the whole of reality. Schleiermacher missed the essentially Christian point of view because his whole effort on its theoretical side was to graft Christianity into pantheism. All his writings betray the irrepressible conflict between the Christian and the pantheistic elements. Yet his emphasis upon the religious consciousness was a factor of unspeakable value at the time when he wrote. His emphasis of the Christian consciousness as the seat of authority was an essential part of his general pantheistic tendency. In this particular he mistook the function of the Christian consciousness, although he brought the study of religion back where it belongs, the inner life of the soul. The correlation of Schleiermacher's view with a true theism is the direction we must now take.

Ritschl rendered excellent service at certain

points, but in his exclusion of the mystical element from religion he produced essentially the contradictions of Kant. In a scientific age wherein the passion for reality has become with many almost a form of worship it was vain to erect religious agnosticism into the first place in theological and doctrinal constructions.

Pascal and Butler and Coleridge alike had a profound intuition of the nature of the religious life as contrasted with other forms of activity. With Butler the rationalistic and speculative were too controlling for his method to become permanent in the defense of religion. Pascal and Coleridge perceived clearly the inner and spiritual nature of religion in contrast with intellectualism. But theories of knowledge had not advanced so far as in our day. The defects and limitations of deductive logic, the fallacies of abstract thought, the precarious nature of absolute philosophies, had not then received the exposure of later times. Professor James stated a great and valuable truth in his famous essay, "The Will to Believe." The soul has a perfect right to assume God's existence and act upon the assumption. But the "will to believe" may be exercised in an intellectualistic way merely without including the vital inner principle of religion as spiritual union with God. A man may adopt as a practical proposition the reality of God's existence and lead a moral life based on the belief. This is not, however, what Jesus means by religion.

Nothing short of personal union with God in intimate and loving fellowship meets his requirement.

In our own period, especially during the last fifty or sixty years, the crucial issue has been felt chiefly in the effort to apply a standard of truth and reality derived from the study of physical nature to the personal realm. The solution of the difficulty is found in the nature of religious truth. We have found an empirical basis for the religious life in the knowledge acquired in religious experience. Thus the scientific demand for reality is met. At the same time our interaction with the noumenal world of Kant proves, contrary to his theory, that it is a knowable world like physical nature. Religion is thus removed from the realm of mere ideals and values and postulates into the realm of the concrete, the actual, and the given. The order of truth and reality contained therein is in no sense in conflict with that of the cosmos. It is simply diverse and supplementary. The union of the two orders in a common point of view can never take place under the conception of physical substance. If any sort of monistic harmony is to arise, it must be on the higher plane of personality. Practically this cannot be done in our present state of knowledge. Meantime we may rest content so far as the interests of religion are concerned in the unity of the kingdom of God and proceed on the assumption that the cosmos was made for that and not *vice versa*. In his "Creative Evolution," Professor Bergson

seeks to show how matter is "generated" by mind or from mind in a most interesting way. He thus aims to bridge the real chasm encountered in all monistic philosophies. In our view he does not prove his main point, but he has indicated the point at which philosophy must concentrate attention in order to a final solution of the problem of the relations of God and man to nature. The Scriptures anticipated all our philosophies in exalting righteousness to the supreme place in the universe, as Isaiah clearly indicates. The apostle Paul in various connections shows that the particular form of righteousness which is to arise is that of sons of God for whose full revelation and emancipation the whole creation groans and travails.

We will not hold then with those who deny religious knowledge and contend that religion is merely an ideal adopted by us for practical ends; nor with those who demand that the Christian religion be reconstructed in the interest of physical continuity and thus lose all its most distinctive features; nor again do we hold with those who would set up a conflict between faith and knowledge or religion and science. We hold rather that they are independent spheres of experience, each autonomous within its own limits, having their own criteria of truth with no possibility of real conflict, and that all the methods of scientific research are applicable in the religious sphere save continuity, the characteristic criterion of physical science.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST

We have now reached the stage where it is in order to gather up the threads of our discussion and to indicate their relation to our main purpose, the reconciliation of the principles of freedom and authority in religion.

We sum up briefly. First, we have seen that a purely subjective principle of authority fails in religion. It is based on pantheism. It is out of accord with the psychological laws of growth in knowledge. It is unworkable practically. It is exposed to the attacks of anti-moral and anti-Christian philosophy.

We found that criticism leaves us the Jesus of faith as presented in the Gospels. This means that for substance of teaching these records stand. By the Jesus of faith we do not refer to the definitions of Christ's person by early councils, but simply the Jesus whom faith holds as Redeemer and Lord and as unclassifiable with other men.

We have found that continuity in the physical sense does not and cannot explain the facts of the religious life where we have to do with free rather than physical causation.

It has also been shown that the psychology of religious belief favors the principle of authority since it shows how definite beliefs arise as we discover truth and how new redeeming forces enter consciousness in Christian experience.

We have further seen that rationalism remains permanently unstable, and hence fails to afford an adequate support for the moral and spiritual life.

Religion, it has been shown, requires personality in its object as well as in the subject. Personality in turn, as it becomes active in religion, illustrates in a very unique and extraordinary way the necessity of recognizing the presence of will in our processes of knowing.

It has become clear also that there are elements of genuine knowledge in religious experience. This knowledge lifts religion above the plane of merely rational or logical deduction and the mere "will to believe," and supplies a fact-basis for religious teachings. It is this actual experience of God which changes the nature of philosophy from a merely deductive process based on data outside experience, and converts it into a constructive process which interprets and explains our living experience.

We have pointed out also how the principle of authority arises in all spheres, as truth is discovered; and along with this we have seen how human progress is dependent upon the principle of authority.

Authority then is a universal law. But freedom also is the goal of man. It too is an undying ideal

and necessary to human welfare. Now we shall find, paradoxical as it may seem, that Jesus Christ while retaining the principle of authority combines it with the perfect ideal of human freedom. Christianity is as truly the religion of freedom as it is the religion of authority.

In order to prepare the way for a statement which shall include the ideals of freedom and authority, we must recur for a moment to our discussion of the nature of religion. There we found that religion is not only carried on in terms of personality, but that personality in the object is essential to the very idea of religion. This is due to the fact that in religion man seeks ends which personal beings alone can bestow. Religion, therefore, requires personality in the object as well as in the subject. We may now carry this definition of religion a step higher and say that religion is that reciprocal relation between the divine and human persons in which the respective personalities involved in the relationship receive that consideration and deference which the nature of personality itself and the relations between the human and divine persons require. Or more briefly, just as God must be duly revered in all true worship, so also must man's personality be respected in every just conception of religion. Religion then in its true meaning is that interaction of God and man in which due tribute is paid to God by man and all the interests of man are in the highest degree conserved by God.

Among those human interests is freedom and the highest development of personality itself. Here the true ideal of religion coincides exactly with the ideal of scientific unbelief in the demand that the rights of personality be safeguarded at every point. Unfortunately for scientific unbelief, however, it cuts the ground from beneath its own feet when it declines to accept the personal interpretation of the world and merges all values in the idea of substance and physical continuity. Human personality has no secure basis in an impersonal universe. If the interests of personality are to be duly conserved, then we must conceive religion as the direct approach of the soul of man to God, the freedom of man to approach God, and the equality of men in their privilege of access to God.

Now this view of religion at once raises the religious life of man to the plane of other human rights. It shows it to be as fundamental and vital as the right of man to freedom of thought or any other form of human right. From this starting-point we may at once proceed to eliminate several forms of authority which have no place in man's religious life since they thwart or hinder the free development of his personality.

We begin with all authorities which from the point of view of intellectualism alone interject themselves into man's religious life. Religion is the assertion of the soul's right to find truth and reality for religious ends just as science and



philosophy are the assertion of the soul's right to find truth and reality for intellectual ends. As diverse but legitimate human interests, we assume that man is able gradually to realize all his ends, intellectual as well as religious, and that there is and can be no real conflict. The right of religion is the soul's right to be loyal, that is, to find objects of devotion, such as causes, creeds, persons. In religion loyalty takes on its highest form. No authority of a purely rationalistic kind can ever find a legitimate ground for hindering or forbidding the life-adjustment of man wherein he finds a religious object. Knowledge inevitably arises in greater or less degree through this religious adjustment, which in turn is reduced to objective form and expression and gradually assumes the character of an authority in man's religious life. When it is argued by believers that Christianity is the ideal response to man's religious adjustment, the reply is sometimes made that this does not prove that Christianity is true. This reply to the Christian is not well considered or serious. Surely no man will forsake that which meets his need perfectly for something less perfect. Moreover, the objector assumes that nothing can prove the truth of religion save mathematical demonstration. As we have seen, such demonstration would not merely prove Christianity, it would also discredit it at the same time. No mathematically demonstrated faith would for a moment adequately serve our religious needs.

There are indeed two forms of the criticism of religion which proceeds all the time, the scientific and the religious. The scientific criticism will remove superstitions and false views of nature, but it will never touch the heart of the religious life. It is not an authority there at all. The failure, in such large measure, of the scientific criticism of Christianity is due to the fact that it has been an attempt to destroy a form of reality itself. Men go on their way in their religious life, not because they are without respect for science, but because they know that a large part of the scientific criticism, that is, where it touches the heart of religion, is irrelevant.

The religious criticism of religion is the severest of all criticisms of religion. This is one of the chief contributions of Christianity to the religious life of the world. Prior to Christianity religions collided as nations collided. They conquered as the sword conquered. Or else they lived side by side under systems of toleration. Christianity on the other hand introduced the principle of the religious criticism of religion. The only authoritative form of the criticism of religion is the religious form. Only a better religion will destroy men's confidence in a false religion. Scientific and philosophic truth unattended by better or higher religious truth will avail nothing. For these are not authorities in religion at all. The approach of Christianity to heathen people is no presumption, but an inherent

right. It involves always what Paul said to the Athenians. It is the answer to the religious quest of all men. It is the interpretation of the religious life of all men. It is the fulfilment of the religious ideal for all men. Its approach to other religions, therefore, implies the acceptance of all truth and the correction of all error in them. Christianity is the supreme and only effective criticism, therefore, of the religions of mankind. Its criticism, however, is equally a plea for the religious rights of mankind. The lordship of Jesus is never understood save as a means to emancipation. His program is emancipation, his method is lordship, as we shall see. His sphere of influence is primarily the religious sphere. He has quietly and steadily assumed the religious leadership of the race because of the effectiveness and finality of his religious criticism of religion.

This leads at once to a question: If science and philosophy are not authorities in religion, does religion paralyze reason? Has reason no place in religion? The preceding pages have in many forms anticipated this question and answered it. The issue as thus stated is a false one. It is not a question at all between the activity and the suspension of the reason. Reason is active in genuine religion. Christianity preeminently respects reason in man, because reason is an inalienable element of human personality. Just because the free development of personality is a human right, the untrammelled

exercise of reason is a human right. The imposition of doctrinal beliefs upon men by fiat merely or by force would contradict the central truths of Christianity. Indeed, such imposition of beliefs would not be religion at all, but something else wholly alien to the true religious life. For, as we have seen, religion is the personal interaction of God and man, and not merely the "holding for true" of doctrines nor the imposition of doctrines. We shall see presently how doctrines arise and what is their function in religion. Meantime we assert that the free unfolding of our personality imperatively calls for freedom of thought on man's part. The reason is not stifled at all, but set free in religion, most of all in the Christian religion.

"How then," it is asked, "do you explain the real and alleged conflict between reason and faith through the ages?" The answer is very direct and simple. Such alleged or real conflict has been due to an unwarranted arraying of one human right against another. The right to think and the right to religion are not conflicting rights at all. They are equal and coordinate. A man may elect to ignore religion and exercise his reason alone, just as he may work with one hand and leave the other idle, or close one eye for special ends while he searches the landscape of truth with the other. But this does not at all affect the right of another man to work with both hands and open both eyes. Religious experience is the other hand, the other eye of

man's spirit. Now the logical mill, reason, grinds only such grist as is poured into it, no matter which side of man's nature is in action. If the scientific eye alone is open and the scientific hand gathers data and pours them into the logical mill, only a scientific result will follow, laws and generalizations about nature. But if the religious eye and hand are at work, man's spirit reacts upon another sphere of reality and the reason handles the data of religion. The reason then is active in either sphere.

Recall our previous conclusions. Religion is not merely rational belief or simply a general "will to believe." If so, concrete data would be lacking and religion would remain merely speculative. Religion on the contrary is a form of experience, and hence a form of knowledge. It thus calls for the play of the reasoning powers precisely as in other forms of experience, of course guided by the standards of truth and explanation appropriate to the sphere in which it works. The "conflict" then is not because religion is illogical and science and philosophy are logical. All are logical alike. The alleged conflict arises only when the spheres of the respective forms of experience are confounded and the standards or material of the one are forcibly imposed on the other. In short, only the unwarranted setting up of one human right against another can lead to any real conflict between religion and other forms of truth. We conclude, then, that as a personal adjustment between God and man religion adds a

hemisphere to the sum total of truth attainable by man. By recognizing the inalienable right of reason in the religious sphere as well as the scientific, it widens the horizon of personality and opens the door for its development upward and outward incomparably beyond the range of ordinary science. Thus religion is not the enemy of the free development of personality, but its sole condition in the widest sense.

What then are the limits of reason in the religious sphere? Those limits are precisely analogous to those in other spheres. Reason does not create reality anywhere, nor does it set aside any realities it may encounter. Its function is simply to discover the realities around it and formulate the results of its discoveries. Reason, therefore, cannot forcibly alter anything it discovers in Christ and in Christianity. These are facts as definite and tangible as any facts of nature. The reason may manipulate the Christian material to the utmost in criticism or otherwise. It may encounter mysteries which it cannot fathom. If so, it cannot explain them away. It can only leave them as they stand or accept the New Testament explanation of them. If, however, the dominant interest of the quest for the truth is religious, then the construction of the mysteries will inevitably take the religious form. They will be construed in the interest of religion. That is to say where no other form of human right is violated, the religious man will interpret reality in the

interest and from the point of view of religion, because he seeks the highest development of his personality and the most complete realization of his destiny.

We are led next to the place of the Christian consciousness in religion. Is it the final court of appeal for the Christian? Here again we must construe the principle in relation to our fundamental assumption in which all parties agree, viz., the free development of personality, and also in relation to the essential character of religion as adjustment or reciprocal relation between the human and divine persons.

The usual reply to the plea for Christian consciousness as the norm or standard of judgment in religion has much force. It runs as follows: First of all the Christian consciousness varies much. It varies as to individuals. It is not the same in the same individual in successive periods of life. It varies in successive ages of Christian history because the intellectual forms for conceiving truth are not uniform. It varies ethically because of ethical growth, and theologically for a similar reason. Different schools or types of Christians often hold directly opposing views. The first section of this book has already shown the failure of a purely subjective principle in religion. Underlying it is an essentially pantheistic world-view, which most effectually cancels rather than affords scope for the free development of personality.

These are the usual arguments and they carry

much weight. They may in large measure be summed up by saying that the Christian consciousness at the present stage of man's religious life is incapable of clear definition because it is so variable among Christians. Each school considers itself the ripest, the most advanced type of the Christian consciousness. If this variety itself is postulated as the ultimate ideal for the religious life, then the pantheism becomes frank and open and not merely implicit. All forms of the Christian consciousness cannot be equally valid, save on the supposition of an impersonal world-ground, and the cancelation of the distinction between truth and error. It may be urged that there is, after all, a minimum of truths in which all Christians are agreed and that to this extent the Christian consciousness is authoritative. But even this minimum when fixed would be too narrow to serve all the ends of religion. We may concede the point that the final Christian consciousness will doubtless agree with all the truths of Christianity. But this would adjourn indefinitely the question of a norm or authoritative standard. Meantime the specific problem and task of Christianity is to train men to a common consciousness by means of a norm or standard not yet fully assimilated by them. How can we transcend our present attainments unless there is something external to us toward which we may grow?

We admit fully the great value of the modern emphasis upon the Christian consciousness. The



contents of that consciousness, as we have seen, are of very great significance for the Christian religion, and indeed constitute our chief barrier to rationalism in Christian thought. The Christian consciousness is the result of the direct relation of the soul to God and of freedom in the soul's approach to God. But theology has not yet adequately construed the Christian consciousness in relation to religious truth.

There are several radical defects in the view which makes the Christian consciousness the standard of judgment in religion. One of these is that it is based on a false view of religious truth borrowed from physical science. It is the same subtle foe which we have traced in so many forms in our preceding discussion. It is assumed that the same principle of explanation is needed for the purposes of religion as for physical science. So long as you can apply the criterion of continuity or descriptive consistency you have all the conditions for physical science. Actually given phenomena are the material of physical science. This is the case in religion also. But religion has a transcendent element essential to its very life, and the data are different in kind from those of physics. Because of sin and finite limitations, consciousness never grasps all of the religious Object. The contents of consciousness at any given time in the individual or the group, therefore, can never be the final interpretation of the meaning of religion, especially of the Christian religion. Of

course the Christian consciousness is the conventional standard, but religion must have more than a conventional standard. If we are to make moral and spiritual progress, we must move toward something higher than all our present attainments.

The theory also overlooks a subtle danger, viz., that often we may place to the credit of consciousness simply our inferences from the contents of consciousness. The data of consciousness must be very sharply defined if we are to raise consciousness to the first place for the final adjudication of religious truth.

Again the view ignores the meaning of the reciprocal relation between subject and object in religion. Two consciousnesses are involved in the religious relation, God's and man's. We are scarcely warranted in the claim that the human side of the relationship is determinative. Of course I am here speaking as a Christian and assuming a revelation of God in and through Christ. Christianity means that God has become active in an especial manner in the religious life of man, and that he has made himself known objectively to us as well as in our consciousness. It is not then a tenable view that in a reciprocal relationship, in which two consciousnesses interact, man's and God's, the human consciousness is the seat of authority. It is here that the unique place of Jesus Christ appears. God's consciousness apart from Christ never becomes a sufficiently definite and compelling idea to serve

fully man's religious needs. Human consciousness of God apart from Christ never becomes sufficiently clear for the highest effectiveness in religion. Jesus Christ objectifies God's consciousness and creates the Christian consciousness.

We conclude then that if the free development of personality is the ideal for man, and if religion is the reciprocal interaction of God and man, the Christian consciousness cannot be the norm and standard of religious truth. It is too narrow at any particular stage of human growth and becomes a burden even when self-imposed if it is held in a manner which bars the way to the heights beyond present attainment. One of the dearest rights of the soul is the privilege of transcending present attainments. Unless some way is provided for us to pass beyond the errors and infirmities of an imperfectly trained present consciousness; unless, in other words, we recognize the problem of error and sin in all our relative stages of Christian consciousness, we defeat the chief end of the Christian calling. Of course our present attainments limit our testimony if we are sincere. We can only speak what God has taught us. But unless I can carry with me always a sense of the non-finality and insufficiency of my present Christian consciousness, I am in sad case. My personality is thwarted in its upward strivings save on the view that my religious Object, God, has much more to show me and that I am free to pursue my path upward to the greatest heights.

What of the authority of creeds and confessions of faith? Do they foster man's rights and conduce to the free development of his personality in religion? Creeds have been so misused and abused in the history of Christianity that many have regarded them as the sum of evils for man's religious life. Here again the freedom of personality and the personal intercourse involved in religion furnish the means for estimating the function and value of creeds. Creeds arise as the effort of religious men to interpret and reduce to scientific form the contents of revelation and of Christian experience. They also come into existence as a means of defending the faith against hostile influences. The early ecumenical creeds arose as a reaction against agnosticism. So also creeds are formed for purposes of Christian unity and as a means of propagating the faith. In all these respects the formation and promulgation of creeds are normal expressions of the religious rights of men. In all these ways creeds serve rather than hinder the development of personality. Any authority, therefore, which prohibits the formulation of creeds as man's free expression and confession of religious belief is a tyranny to be resisted.

It is equally true, however, that the imposition of creeds by authority is also a form of tyranny to be resisted. The free acceptance of religious beliefs is the correlative of their free formulation. The peril of creeds is in the tendency to substitute them for

life. They become barriers to the free development of personality in religion whenever the holding of them as true, and the propagation of them as mere intellectual, beliefs take the place of the free intercourse of God and man in religion. This, perhaps, is the chief peril of creeds in our time. The value of creeds then is seen in man's freedom to make them, freedom to propagate them, freedom to transcend them by better creeds, and, above all, freedom to keep them subordinate to life. The tyranny incident to creeds is seen in the effort to prevent others from making them, the imposition of them by authority, and the substitution of formulated creeds for spiritual life through fellowship with God.

It seems scarcely necessary for us to discuss at length the ecclesiastical, priestly, and sacramental forms of authority in religion. The reader has already perceived that we reject all of them in so far as they interfere with the free intercourse of the soul with God. Ecclesiastical authority legislates for men in a sphere where legislative authority has no place or function. Priestly authority cancels the very conception of religion in its Christian form where all believers are priests because of the free access of all to God by faith. All of these forms of authority cancel religion to a greater or less extent and are unwarranted barriers to man's free progress in the religious life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the author's work, entitled "The Axioms of Religion," for full discussion of the peril of ecclesiastical and hierarchical forms of authority in religion, Chap. IV, VII, and VIII.

There remains then the Bible as a possible source of authority in religion. Is it the final authority for man's religious life? We defer the answer to this question until we have discussed a prior question with which it is intimately bound up, and that is the authority of Jesus Christ. The authority of the Bible is a burning question for Christians of to-day. Protestantism is being assailed from many quarters as sharing the Roman Catholic principle of authority in its doctrine as to the Bible. A part of the object of this book is to indicate the true Protestant view and to show how current attacks on the line indicated wholly misconceive the Protestant principle of authority, and miss, therefore, the Protestant conception of freedom. The true place of the Bible in man's religious life, that required by the logic of the Protestant principle, and that actually held by the Reformers themselves and a considerable part of the Protestant world since, is distinctly not that which is alleged by men like Sabatier. This school of thought has failed to grasp accurately the point of view of the men of the Reformation, and hence has failed to understand their doctrine of the Scriptures. This we shall make clear as we proceed.

The men who inveigh against the Protestant conception of Scripture commit themselves to a principle which occasions many of them great embarrassment. I refer especially to those who wish somehow to accord to Jesus Christ spiritual lord-

ship in man's religious life. Sharing the demand for a rigidly "scientific" theology, these thinkers who are also Christians find themselves unable to provide any definite or satisfactory place for Jesus in their scheme of things. They are unwilling to class him with other great religious leaders since, to them, he obviously transcends all these in a unique manner. As objective to the soul and historical in the first instance, he comes to men from without. And yet if, as coming from without, he is accepted as an authority in religion, the much repudiated and wholly untenable Roman Catholic principle thereby returns to torment them. The result is that one wing of these opponents of authority follow their logic and science to the only legitimate outcome and take Jesus as simply one among the religious aristocrats of history and fall back on the subjective principle entirely. The other wing, with a more pronounced religious interest, adopt some euphemism for the hated word authority and smuggle it in thus disguised, while proceeding to define the religious life of the Christian as if the principle of authority were wholly absent. We have seen the operation of this tendency in Sabatier and others. The soul is made the "seat" of authority with a greater or less degree of indefiniteness as to the meaning of "seat." With a writer like Martineau there is no inconsistency in this. The parts of his general view may be made to hold together because he frankly rejects Christ as sustaining any

such authoritative relation to the religious life of man as evangelical Christianity has held. Not so, however, with the other group who seek to abolish authority and yet retain Christ. It is with these that our discussion now has to do. There are at least four respects in which their thought is unclear and their general scheme inconsistent. (1) They fail to grasp accurately and apply rigidly the scientific criterion which they insist upon for theology. (2) They fail to grasp the Christian and Protestant conception of authority. (3) They fail to appreciate the Christian ideal of religion itself as involving the free development of human personality in fellowship with God. (4) They fail in their definition of Christ's relation to religion.

All these assertions will be justified as we proceed, although we shall not pursue formally the order in which we have stated them. First of all let us make clear the scientific method insisted upon. In their assumptions and denials the school of theologians we are dealing with stands for the method of "rigor and vigor" in the application of the scientific criterion to theology. A non-scientific theology is untenable they urge. For them continuity is the scientific criterion implicitly or explicitly kept in the mind's eye. It is this which has given emphasis to the idea of the divine immanence; to the tendency to reduce the biblical miracles to a minimum or eliminate them entirely; to the many compromises or evasions in explaining the resur-



rection of Christ; and in general to the whole movement against the supernatural in Christ's person and work. Continuity is the scientific criterion of truth and explanation which alone has significance against these aspects of Christianity for which reconstruction has been sought. All the other methods and ideals of science are applicable in Christianity as elsewhere.

In accordance, then, with their rigidly scientific point of view, Christianity is reduced to what we shall call a minimum gospel. The reader is referred to the summary of the view given elsewhere in our discussion of Sabatier and kindred writers. In brief, they confine the gospel to our religious intuitions. God is our Father who cares for us. We have a sense of sonship. We find in him forgiveness of sins and justification, and the hope of eternal life springs up in our hearts. Now Christ is the mediator of this knowledge of God to us because he enjoyed perfect fellowship with God. As we reproduce in ourselves Christ's consciousness, we realize his blessedness and enter into fellowship with God. This is the meaning of redemption. Christ never, however, transcends the purely human. We do not worship Christ in any sense. All this is explicit and clear in the writers named.

The view is not a satisfactory one from the point of view of the scientific criterion. It is assumed that in and through Christ we really know God as personal and paternal. But assuredly we do not

know him as thus demonstrated in the scientific sense. The scientific demand is for knowledge arising in a particular way. The older arguments for God's existence, the cosmological and teleological and the ontological, are rejected because they nowhere show an actual causal nexus between the effect and the cause. We pursue an endless regress of effects and causes, but never rise above the causal chain. Or we may strive to deduce God from the necessary laws of thought, claiming that thought finds no resting-place until it rests in God, that God is the presupposition of all thought or reason. Or we may endeavor to prove him from will by showing that the uncaused energy which must lie in the background of all physical and derived energy is the energy of a personal will. But science as such is not convinced and cannot be convinced by such arguments, since none of them yields the form of explanation which science demands. All of them come short of explanation in terms of continuity. As a part of the law of continuity, science insists that we never know wholes, but only parts. All scientific knowledge then is accurately defined knowledge of parts and only of parts.

If this is true, it follows clearly that a purely human Jesus does not reveal God to men. Such a Jesus has not capacity to be the organ of a complete divine revelation. He has only the prophet's vision, and all visions of prophets are partial. None of them is exhaustive. Jesus thus becomes a

human searcher for God rather than a divine revealer of God. If God is to reveal himself, it is needful that he take the initiative and come to man, and not remain aloof to be found to a greater or less extent by man. If religion is to be completed, both sides of the relationship, the divine as well as the human, must come into articulate expression. A Jesus who knows only the effects of a superior power in his consciousness as man, who interprets them in the human and personal terms of his own inner life and needs, may indeed give the correct version of the power from without which works in and upon him. But the critical student of science does not hesitate and in the past has not hesitated to deny the final validity of even Christ's interpretation of religious experience. Everything over and above what we find in consciousness itself is over-belief from his standpoint. Thus it is clear that if we assume a simply human consciousness and capacity for Jesus in the ordinary scientific way and in order to a scientific theology, then we have no right to claim that we know God as paternal and personal and redemptive in and through Christ. For the scientific theologian, therefore, who adopts the method of "rigor and vigor" with his principle of continuity there is no knowledge of God in any such sense and degree as is claimed by them. They smuggle it into their systems without scientific justification. Their proper place is with Ritschl, who quite consistently held that an agnostic attitude

toward the ultimate truths of religion is the only scientifically justifiable one. But religious agnosticism in this radical sense is rapidly becoming an antiquated point of view for theology. It is wholly inadequate for the purposes of religion. Religion requires reality in its object as imperiously as science demands it.

Here it will be insisted that the sinlessness of Jesus is the basis of our confidence in the truth of his revelation of God. Of course we concede his sinlessness, but we deny the sufficiency of the force of the argument. Sinlessness in a man does not enlarge capacity above the human. Sinlessness gives no inclusive knowledge of God. But first and chiefly sinlessness itself is a breach of continuity. The transcendence of Christ's person above the human and his sinlessness are parts of a whole; they are of a piece according to the New Testament representations. The testimony for the one is as solidly based as that for the other, as we have seen. But even if the transcendence is denied and the sinlessness maintained, the principle of continuity is broken upon that fact. How humanity has risen to the plane of sinlessness in one member of it while submerged in evil in all the antecedents and consequents continuity cannot explain. Theology fails at this point also to be scientific according to the method of "rigor and vigor" with the principle of continuity. It does not and cannot explain a sinless Jesus. The failure then is twofold: First, we fail

to get God, the Father, through a sinless Christ, on the principle of continuity; and secondly, we fail to get a sinless Christ thus.

There is more to be said as to the sinlessness of Christ in relation to human redemption. The school of thought we are now dealing with holds to Christ's redemptive function in the sense indicated. But a sinless human Christ is both too far from us and too near us to act as our redeemer from sin. Such a Christ is too far from us in his sinlessness. His sinlessness puts him in a class by himself apart from us. The conditions of that sinlessness are beyond our reach. His friendliness toward sinners does not avail, for he cannot impart his sinlessness to them or remove their sense of guilt. As human he is too near us to help us. Redemption calls for a divine power grasping and lifting us.

We find in consequence of the situation we have just outlined that writers on theology in our day follow one or another of the following courses: (1) If they face squarely and consistently the task which a reconstruction of theology on the principle of continuity demands, they nearly always abandon everything distinctive in the religion of the New Testament and cancel the interests of personality in the interests of the cosmos and physical causation. (2) Or they abandon the effort to arrive at truth in religion and seek to maintain religion on an agnostic basis. (3) Or they compromise both the religious

and scientific principles and set up systems which come short of both ideals. (4) Or in the fourth place they recognize that in religion and physical science we are dealing with diverse criteria of truth and explanation as well as radically diverse forms of reality. It must be abundantly clear to the reader that the last view is that which we advocate.

We pause here to consider an example of the compromise view. Professor Herrmann, in his treatise "The Communion of the Christian with God," presents one of the most attractive forms of it. We must of course state it briefly and in its essential points only. It is as follows: We cannot know God through a teaching, but only through a fact. Faith thus includes knowledge. The fact essential to faith is the appearance of Jesus in history. Jesus alone makes it certain that God communes with us. He regenerates us by coming to us as the power of God in us transforming us morally.<sup>2</sup> In short, Jesus is as God to us and he is such because he is God, revealed not in a teaching, but in a person, who was a fact of history. This is, of course, in line with Paul and the Epistles of the New Testament so far as it goes. God revealed in a person, God acting on us through a person, personalized grace, this is the New Testament teaching. The law *was given*, and grace and truth *came*. Observe further, however, some of Herrmann's denials. We do not know that Christ rose from the

<sup>2</sup> "Communion with God," pp. 225, 226, 64, 65, 63, 282f.

dead, since this is merely the report of others. If we believe he lives and rules it is simply an inference. We have no ground for asserting that Christ now lives and communes with us.<sup>3</sup>

How then does this revelation, this power of God in a person, reach us? Herrmann replies that faith in Christ is not dependent upon a historical judgment. The Gospel histories are thus dependent, since criticism settles many questions regarding them. We reach Christ in another way. It is through the portrait of Jesus given in the Gospels. When we study that portrait, gaze upon it, yield ourselves to it, we know it is a true portrait of an actual historic Christ, because of the power of God to redeem which it brings to us.<sup>4</sup> So far as Christ is an object of historical criticism he is not an object of faith.<sup>5</sup> Yet we know of his actual existence in the past through the awakening power of his portrait.

Now it is not difficult to see the contradictions in Herrmann's view. God can only be known through a personal medium, not through a teaching or record. Yet there is no existing personal medium through whom God reaches us, whom we call Christ. 'All we have is a literary portrait of such a medium who once existed. It is asserted that a personal medium is necessary, and then it is asserted that a portrait alone is necessary. Next it is asserted that faith is not dependent on a historical judgment,

<sup>3</sup> "Communion with God," pp. 290-292.

<sup>4</sup> "Communion with God," pp. 67, 70, 72, 283, 284.

<sup>5</sup> P. 70.

and at once we are referred to a portrait to be found imbedded only in a historical record. Herrmann, unlike most Ritschlians, has a strongly mystical vein, a sense of the divine presence and power. God acts upon him through Christ's portrait exactly *as if* Christ were alive and acting upon him as he did upon those in the New Testament period. Herrmann seeks in vain to combine the idea that grace comes only through a person, with the contradictory idea that grace comes through a portrait. Personalized grace is the New Testament teaching everywhere. Paul expounds the gospel on this basis throughout his Epistles. God reaches men through the personal, living, and present Christ after as well as before his death and resurrection. He is thus consistent with himself and the rest of the New Testament. Herrmann's failure is due to an unfruitful effort to apply a scientific criterion in a sphere where it does not belong. Even then he does not escape the principle of authority, since the portrait of Jesus remains the authoritative source and guide in religion.

It is not surprising that Ritschlians tend not to remain consistently Ritschlian, but to go forward or backward. The imperious demand of their scientific principle calls for less and the urgency of the religious need calls for much more than their standpoint yields. The present situation, which they have largely created, cannot be clarified without a readjustment of view as to how science and religion



are related to each other. If Jesus is redeemer we must grant to him the attributes and functions of redeemer. Such a Christ alone suffices for the religious need and as a religious authority.

Since the minimum Christ of the minimum gospel fails to yield a principle of authority which allows for the free development of our personality; since the sainthood of Jesus alone is incompatible with the burden of redemption which men have imposed upon him, we proceed to interpret his person and his authority in other and larger terms. We must not forget that religion is the communion of God and man under such conditions that due reverence is paid to God and due provision made for man's free spirit, and that authority in religion must take account of both sides of the religious relationship.

We observe first then that Jesus Christ is the true revelation of God. The problem and the despair of philosophy before Christ was to find God. The problem and despair of religion before Christ was to find God. There were insights intellectual and spiritual, but no commanding and arresting revelation of God or discovery of God had appeared. This is the distinctive Christian truth. Before Christ men sought God if haply they might find him. In Christ God was seeking men. Here was revelation from the divine side of the religious relation. It was not God speaking to another man simply who in turn spoke to us. It was God himself objectify-

ing himself in a human life, visualizing himself to us, emerging from the obscurity of the infinite into distinct form and approaching man for his redemption. Of course men may deny *a priori* the possibility of an incarnation, but in so doing they imply the impossibility of any effective personal form of revelation of God to men. Incarnation is the highest possible form of divine revelation to us since human personality is the highest created form of existence known to us. Nature and all between nature and man are inadequate as media for the expression of personality.

Now the New Testament sets forth in the life and work of Jesus the principle of revelation and redemption through personalized grace; not, be it observed, grace personalized for a time and then enshrined in a record merely, but grace permanently personalized, first in the earthly, and later in the risen and ascended and reigning Christ. This work is not primarily an apologetic, but rather an exposition of the unitary Christian principle of freedom and authority. Hence we omit many things appropriate in a defense of Christianity. We may remark in passing, however, that the finality of the synthesis which Christianity gives of the principle of freedom and authority is itself no mean factor in an apologetic for Christianity.

Jesus Christ then is the "seat" of authority in religion. In him God sits, or rather in and through him God acts for our redemption. This is the New

Testament teaching throughout. Now there are no terms in which the highest ideal of religious authority may be set forth, no ideal conditions for the protection and free unfolding of human personality which are not personally embodied in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Redeemer of men. His task begins precisely where that of physical science ends. He alone is Master in dealing with the intractable residues of science which we have previously discussed. He reveals God and brings life and immortality to light. In short, he is the demonstration under historical conditions of two great realities: First, that God and immortality are facts; and secondly, that continuity is not the ultimate principle of the universe. Thus he opens to men a sphere of the real into which they escape from the prison-house of the cosmos.

In opening up this new sphere of reality for man Jesus also puts an end to the unstable equilibrium of philosophy which we have seen is inherent in intellectualism as such. He does this not by an arbitrary arrest of thought, but simply by supplying new material for thought and by creating a new world of experience, and showing that only a total reaction of our nature, will as well as reason, upon ultimate reality, yields the whole truth. In all this we perceive clearly the relation of Jesus to the free unfolding of personality. He alone vindicates the assumptions which underlie the conception of personality and freedom. Science and philosophy have

often unwisely disparaged Christ because of his alleged hostility to the free unfolding of our personal life. Yet science never gives us more than a phenomenal personality and is helpless to establish it on its deeper grounds. Philosophy can only give us a group of hypotheses, some of which indeed imply the grounds of our personal life, but others with equal vigor deny them. Jesus alone is the true champion of the personal life and its free development, and this not in what he claims merely, but in what he achieves and in achieving reveals as to God and man. The cosmos with its relentless law of continuity forever impends, ready to crush us or quench our personal life until Jesus emancipates us into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He creates the kingdom of freedom over against the necessitarian reign of law in the cosmos.

It is clear also how Jesus sets us free from other forms of illegitimate authority in religion. All ecclesiastical or institutional, sacramental or priestly forms of authority which in any degree interfere with the direct and free intercourse of man with God in Christ, are thereby adjudged unworthy of place in man's religious life.

In yet another way Jesus serves the ends and provides for the free unfolding of personality. He saves us from mysticism. This is a form of bondage which now and then modern scientific students of religion insist upon. Embarrassed by the attempt to apply in a thorough-going way the scientific prin-

ciple, and yet feeling deeply the religious need, they fly to mysticism as a refuge in time of storm. But mysticism represses and paralyzes instead of freeing and unfolding the personal life. The mystical view, therefore, escapes embarrassment only by canceling the factors of the real in personal character. Absorption in the Infinite, as proposed by mysticism, is only another form of statement for absorption in the cosmos which materialism proposes. Jesus, on the contrary, opens up to man an infinite vista for the free development of his personality. Jesus brings God near to men in their religious life, and thus bridges the chasm which deism creates. Yet in bringing God into our life he leaves our total personality inviolate. The mystical and the personal thus blend in a complete harmony.

We may note next the extent of the authority of Jesus as the revealer of God and the founder of the kingdom of God on earth. We require only a very brief statement, since our theme does not deal so much with the practical bearings of the authority of Christ in the kingdom of God as with the principle of authority. Jesus revealed God to men. He declared what God is and how he feels toward men, God's purpose of redemption for men, and the coming of God's kingdom on earth.<sup>6</sup> He also declared himself to be the sole organ or medium of the saving revelation of God to men.<sup>7</sup> He declared the

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 5 to 7; Mark 1 : 15.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 10 : 21-24.

worth of man in God's sight and the destiny of men.<sup>8</sup> He declared himself to be the final Judge of men; the Arbiter of their eternal destiny.<sup>9</sup> These points have already been brought out in our discussion of the modern criticism of the Gospels and we need not dwell upon them here.<sup>10</sup>

There are certain qualities which are self-evidently required in any form of religious authority which shall allow play for human freedom and the unconstrained development of the personal life. These are as follows: (1) Moral loftiness. Herrmann is right in saying that our souls would revolt at any religious power which might seek to assert its authority over us unless in it we recognize the presence of eternal moral law. (2) Universality. The authority must be in its essential character applicable to humanity as such regardless of race, climate, civilization, or stage of moral or mental development. (3) Nearness. It must not be a remote and inaccessible authority, but close to us and available practically in time of need. (4) Benignity. It cannot use compulsion. There must be in it no element of harshness or arbitrariness. (5) Winsomeness. This is an aspect of the preceding mark. Yet a benign power might conceivably be unattractive, whereas in the highest form of religion winsomeness is essential to the free development of our

<sup>8</sup> Luke 15.

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 25 : 31f.

<sup>10</sup> See also the author's work, "Why is Christianity True?" Chap. VII to XV.

personality. (6) Tangibility. By this is meant such definiteness of outline and concreteness as to bring it into human life as an actual force for guidance and moral power. (7) Inspirational value. It must so touch us as to awaken the slumbering possibilities within us and lead us out of ourselves to higher attainments. (8) Majesty and dignity. It must command us as well as appeal to us. It must awaken our respect and reverence as well as our admiration. It must evoke obedience as well as praise. (9) Dynamic power. This means that the authority must not be static or stereotyped. It must possess an inner wealth, a breadth and range which will allow for all the stages of human growth. Moreover, it must be vital in the sense that its correspondence with the worshiper is not broken at any stage, but is capable of being maintained always in living union with him. (10) Finality. Of course, any form of religious authority which can be transcended by the progress of thought or the exigencies of the moral and spiritual life would thereby lose its significance and value for men. (11) We may add as a further mark of the ideal religious authority that it will duly respect all other legitimate forms of authority. There are many lower forms of authority in the family and State, and in society generally.

These marks of the ideal religious authority will scarcely be gainsaid by any. Indeed, an authority which possesses these marks is free from every

objection which can possibly be urged against the principle of authority. One chief objection is the stereotyping of authorities as in creeds and ecclesiasticisms and hierarchies. The objection is valid. No stereotyped form of authority can permanently serve man's religious life, since he outgrows each of them in turn. Life is more than the stereotyped form and through its inherent force bursts the shell asunder. But in our ideal as outlined the authority is dynamic, and is so related to the religious man that it keeps pace with his progress. Stereotyped authorities, then, in so far as they have any justification at all, are all relative and temporary.

Another chief objection to authority in religion is arbitrariness and disregard of personal and individual traits. But if the authority is benign and universal, this objection loses its force. Another objection to authority in religion is that it represses rather than develops the will and personality. But an authority which is winsome and inspirational does nothing of the kind. In such an authority the soul recognizes the object of its own strivings and the realization of its own ends. There can certainly be no tyranny in this form of authority. Again, a religious authority may be near and tangible and yet lacking in moral elevation and dignity; or it may possess the latter quality and remain remote. But if it possesses all four of these, the objection ceases to have point. Externality is also urged as a fatal objection to the principle of



authority in religion. But externality *per se* cannot be a valid objection save on the assumption that there is nothing true or real outside of man, or that he has already assimilated all that is external to him. The first assumption lands him in an absurd solipsism, the second converts him into a god. Externality can only be an objection in religious authority when it is incongruous with man's inner life or repressive of his true development. When the external authority simply vocalizes the eternal it ceases to be a bar to the realization of human destiny and becomes instead a beacon-light for man's guidance and deliverance. Men who admire Jesus as a moral teacher, but reject him as the final authority in religion, are quite consistent in their thinking, but shut themselves off from any adequate knowledge of God. Those who, on the other hand, strive to retain Christ as authority and leave him on the human plane cut the ground from beneath their own feet. For in religion no merely human authority is lawful in the full sense, nor can it be final. Only a Christ who stands above the human plane can be a legitimate authority in religion.

Now it is already obvious to the reader that in the preceding outline of the ideal religious authority we have set it forth in three groups of qualities, the divine, the human, and the personal, although of course the latter is implied in both the former. Ultimately, of course, it goes without saying, God is the supreme authority in religion. But as we have

pointed out in manifold ways, the idea of God is an exceedingly variable and unsatisfactory one until revealed to us in human form. Philosophy never gets beyond an unstable equilibrium of thought, and religious subjectivism never gets beyond an unstable equilibrium of feeling. The race, therefore, apart from revelation, can only flounder or sprawl in its moral and religious life until the moral and religious sanctions are fixed by the coming of the divine into the human life in a determinate way. Jesus Christ, then, and he alone fulfils all the requirements of an authority in religion. By virtue of his historical character, and his externality and objectivity to us, he is essentially an authority, and his religion is inherently a religion of authority. But by virtue of his method of approach to men, his intimacy and nearness, his deference to human personality, his dynamic quality in human life, his religion is also preeminently the religion of the Spirit. Thus Sabatier's antithesis between religions of authority and the religion of the Spirit ceases to have significance in the highest range of religion, that of Jesus Christ.

We recur here to what was said about religious knowledge in the last chapter. We found that in religious experience there was a definite content of knowledge. The scientific student of religious experience recognizes and defines this knowledge, as in the "Varieties of Religious Experience" by Professor James, and by others. Certain results in

consciousness are produced by a power outside of consciousness. Thus we concluded that religion is a form of knowledge based on facts of experience and not merely rational beliefs deduced from what is observed outside of experience. But at this point ordinary scientific explanation stops. The power which produces the inner experience remains unknown.

Why then may we not leave the matter thus and give up all attempts to explain the object of worship? We reply, because this degree of knowledge by itself is inadequate for the religious life. Religion would remain too vague for practical purposes. Besides this it includes only half the truth about religion. We hold further that this arrest of thought is due to the failure of physical continuity only and not to the failure of explanation in personal terms. Here we have not physical but free causation.

"Very well then," it may be said, "what you propose is to select one out of a number of possible causes of religious experience and declare that it is a personal God, after the manner of rationalism in deducing world-views generally." Not at all, we reply. We begin with the actually given historical Jesus of the New Testament and his revelation of God. It is not the method of speculative philosophy at all. Nor is it the method of Herrmann, who seeks to find in a portrait the divine energy and redemptive grace of a personal revelation of God.

Beginning then with the historical Jesus of the New Testament, we find that he interprets our religious experience for us. He tells us what it means. Not only so; he prescribes the conditions for its realization. He goes even further. He claims to originate that experience in us, and after it is originated he maintains our religious life. He declared himself to be the organ of the divine revelation and medium of the divine power to men. Paul thus interprets Christianity just as Jesus interpreted it. Nineteen centuries of Christian experience confirm it. Jesus Christ thus becomes the solution of two human problems, first the religious and secondly the intellectual problem. He completes and interprets the imperfect forms of religious experience. He also stretches his hand across the apparent chasm and binds God and men together where continuity fails. He has entered the realm of free causation and is building up the kingdom of God among men.

Well, then, do we take religious experience apart from its cause as the key to Christianity? No. Do we take the historical Jesus apart from his power in our experience? No. We take both. Each is implicated in the other. Neither comes in fulness without the other. Jesus thus becomes an objective authority for us, not because he gives us a theory about God which we accept. This would be a form of deductive philosophy on his part and ours. Nor because he left us a portrait which appeals to us.

This would offer an ideal without the dynamic for its realization. He is our authority because he is God's truth and God's power to us in our redemption. His inner power and his outward authority are bound up in an indissoluble unity for his people. He offers himself to the world as the key to its speculations about God and the answer to its religious search for God.

We note next Christ's manner of approach to men and his method of evoking their spiritual response. We may sum up his method in a three-fold paradox. 1. His revelations of truth to us are so given as to become discoveries of truth by us. One needs only to trace his dealings with his disciples in the synoptic record to be convinced of the truth of this statement. Nothing was farther from Christ's thought than to impose a dogma of his person upon the unwilling minds of his followers. His method seemed to be rather to repress the early and immature expressions of faith in him. Slowly he would unfold his personality and mission to them. Slowly and patiently he led them to the discovery of himself. He dawned upon them as it were. Finally Peter confesses his Messiahship on the way to Cæsarea Philippi<sup>11</sup> and his memorable benediction follows. He perceived the growth of Peter's spiritual faculty and rejoiced in it. As only the artistic faculty in an observer can appreciate the genius reflected in a masterpiece of art, so also moral

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 16 : 16-20.

and spiritual discernment are necessary to an appreciation of Jesus. This explains the reserve in Christ's teaching. The "many things"<sup>12</sup> which he had to say to the disciples could only be imparted at a later stage of their development. Much cold-blooded "scientific" exegesis in modern times has been strangely mechanical and unappreciative of this point. Men have argued that because Jesus said comparatively little about his atoning work on the cross, for example, we must conclude that the expositions of the atonement in the Epistles are wholly without his warrant. But there was fitness in the reserve of Christ here. When one of us is going to render a great service to a friend we do not keep reminding him of it beforehand. Delicacy of feeling alone forbids. Such obtrusiveness on our part would rob the deed of much of its value. We leave the friend to discover and appreciate our deed after it is done. So with Jesus. He meant for the disciples through the memory of his teachings and by his spiritual presence through the Holy Spirit to discover and appreciate his death for them. He knew well that their minds would expand after his departure and that the full view of his person and work could not be prematurely communicated to them. The Epistles, therefore, constitute a fitting supplement to the Gospels.

It is clear from the foregoing that the method of Jesus is to appeal to the judicial faculty in men.

<sup>12</sup> John 16 : 12.

He calls upon men to pass judgment upon his own message. Paul emphasizes this judicial faculty in a striking manner in his letter to the Corinthians.<sup>18</sup> This is peculiarly the Protestant point of view in interpreting Christianity as distinguished from the Roman Catholic. The papal and priestly authority represses and indeed quenches the judicial faculty entirely. This it does formally and theoretically because it proceeds on the assumption of the incompetency of the soul in religion. Men need and must have human intermediaries to tell them what is the mind of God. The assumption of Christ and of Protestantism is precisely the reverse, viz., that man is capable of direct intercourse and fellowship with God. Christ does not indeed assume that man can find God apart from his revelation of God, for he expressly asserts the contrary. But the method by which Christ makes God known to man involves a spiritual process in which man's moral discernment becomes active. It is never a mere fiat authority enacting decrees and laws in the statutory sense. Here we have a vital distinction between the Roman Catholic and Protestant conceptions of authority. Protestantism does not at all abolish authority in religion, which would be a relapse into rationalism. Yet Protestantism so conceives authority in religion that it pays the utmost respect to individuality and personality. Christ is personalized grace and truth, whose relation to men is not

<sup>18</sup> 1 Corinthians 2 : 14-16.

that of a statute or institution, but rather that of an awakening energy, a dynamic force. Yet he remains objective and historical and final, and, therefore, authoritative.

The nature of Christ's authority appears the moment we contrast it with other kinds of authority. The Romanist submits because a high ecclesiastical authority commands; and he foregoes the exercise of his reason because of his incapacity and by virtue of the right of command in the ecclesiastical superior. Rational beliefs arise on the contrary when the reason perceives convincing grounds for their acceptance. In the case of the Romanist, the rational faculty slumbers. In the case of the other, it is intensely active. In so far, however, as this activity of thought is purely rational, our nature is touched at a single point only. In the soul's response to Jesus Christ as redeemer, on the contrary, there is an awakening of the entire nature, reason, will, emotions. In a word, it is a life-adjustment and not a logical process merely. On our part it is a testing and proving of the moral and spiritual universe by a plunge into it, a reaction upon it as a whole by our whole being. On God's part it is a demonstration to man of his own capacity for the divine life through the impartation of that life. There is a kinship between this conception and that of Schleiermacher whereby he defines religion as the feeling of absolute dependence—a feeling based on the reaction of the



soul upon the universe as a whole. Schleiermacher touched a central truth, but its weakness was in conceiving the universe as impersonal and, as a consequence, making religion consist in feeling alone. Schleiermacher was thus shut up to consciousness as the sole norm and standard of truth, since his fundamental thought provides for no such standard outside of consciousness. He vainly sought to graft Christianity on a pantheistic stock and left an irreconcilable dualism in his system. Christianity cannot escape subjectivism and its emptiness except when construed in the light of its own theistic ground. In it God becomes the spiritual universe upon which man's nature reacts, but Jesus Christ is the point of contact, the revelation and mediation of God to the soul. His authority is not weakened, but greatly enhanced by the fact that he stirs the emotional, moral, and mental faculties in man into the most intense exercise. He creates a throne for himself by creating a new life and a new universe for the soul of man.

It thus appears that the relation of Christ's authority to the reason is not one of exclusion, but of inclusion. The judicial faculty in man, the reason, becomes active in a new context and as the result of a new life-adjustment through Christ. Not the bare rational faculty at work with objective data, but that faculty imbedded in the heart of a new experience most intimate and personal in which Christ's person is central, and in which our entire

nature is active. We may say then that Christ's authority is that of fact and reality, first, as objective to us; secondly, as a personal and living fact which seeks us; and thirdly, as fact to whose personal approach we respond, whose reality we grasp, and whose redemptive relations to us we understand at least in part. As objective fact Christ and his kingdom are like the cosmos, constituting a moral and spiritual order or universe whose laws and forces we discover and recognize as our own universe, that for which we are made. As we cannot annul the cosmos, so we cannot annul him. As we cannot escape the action of physical law, so we cannot escape the action of the laws of his kingdom. Our interaction with the cosmos yields scientific truth; our interaction with Christ yields religious truth. This objective or "cosmic" reality of Christ is that which makes him final as the religious authority. But as personalized grace and truth, approaching, awakening, arousing the whole nature, intellect, emotions, and will, he is the source and fountainhead of human freedom as well. Thus we find in him the complete synthesis of authority and freedom in religion.

2. The second paradox of Christ's authority is that he exerts it by making men free. Paul rejoiced in calling himself the bond-slave of Jesus Christ, and yet his whole career as an apostle echoes with his pæan of victory and freedom. It was this sense of freedom coupled with submission to Christ which

gave energy to the Reformers. They had escaped the bondage and tyranny of a false form of religious authority. There was a swing of the pendulum from one authority that was false to another that was true. That was a winged word which lay behind their movement: "The right of private judgment." With it all forms of human sovereignty in Church and State were destined to be brought to the bar of human judgment, and many of those sovereignties would be shaken to their foundations and others destroyed. And now while yet under the spell of the right of private judgment men return to Jesus and exercise that judgment on him. And with what result? The same as in New Testament times. They listened to his teachings and said: "Never man spake as this man." They gazed on his moral and spiritual beauty and declared: "He is the chief among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely." They followed his majestic figure upward into the divine heights and in the exercise of their right of private judgment they proclaimed: "He is the effulgence of the Father's glory and the image of his substance." The whole Reformation movement was carried on in this mood. Men swung away from papal and priestly authority, but they gathered up the broken fragments of shattered thrones and erected another more absolute than any the world ever saw and seated Christ upon it. They wove a crown of their thanksgiving and praise and obedience and loyalty and placed it on his brow. The

hymnology of Christendom in the periods of great spiritual power since show the same combination of subjection and freedom, slavery and exultation. Christ put his chain on Edward Caswell, and this is what Caswell wrote:

Jesus, the very thought of thee  
With sweetness fills my breast;  
But sweeter far thy face to see  
And in thy presence rest.

Christ subjected Samuel Stennett to his sway, and Stennett in his strange bondage sang:

Majestic sweetness sits enthroned  
Upon the Saviour's brow,  
His head with radiant glories crowned;  
His lips with grace o'erflow.

The modern man is equally intense in his assertion of loyalty and freedom in Christ. Richard Watson Gilder has said:

If Jesus Christ is a man—  
And only a man—I say  
That of all mankind I cleave to him,  
And to him will I cleave alway.

If Jesus Christ is a God—  
And the only God—I swear  
I will follow him through heaven and hell,  
The earth, the sea, and the air!

Now it is impossible that such loyalty could be evoked by any illegitimate form of authority. When the ethical fruits accompany the professions

of loyalty we have a religious phenomenon which cannot be explained as other than the expression of reality in the religious sphere. Men know Jesus as they submit to him. This is voluntarism. He comes to them in response to their adjustment of will to him. Thus he verifies the New Testament form of religious life. Religion is the adjustment of wills, the establishment of correct relations between persons in the universe of persons. The reason why faith is the deepest of all truths is that it is the instinctive adjustment of the deepest of all relations, that between man and God. The reason why we perceive that Christ is the Truth is that he brings about this adjustment. Religious faith then is the original but undefined and unexpressed demand of man's whole nature for the restoration of a lost relationship. That relationship can only be adequately expressed in terms of life. Faith is simply the spiritual equivalent of life in a moral order disturbed by sin. It is the revolt of the soul against sin in its effort to find life. Hence the gospel makes it the condition of life.

There is, therefore, no scientific or philosophic, no theoretical or practical ground whatsoever on which the authority of Christ may be questioned in the life of those who have found him to be an authority. To question it is to question the right of men to freedom of choice in religion. It is to question the right of personal adjustment in the religious sphere, to question our privilege of seeking emancipation

on the religious side of our nature. The cosmos reveals mechanism. Christ reveals sonship. In his face shines the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in its moral and spiritual depth and reality. In nature is reflected his power. Our life-adjustments in the cosmos are no more valid, or philosophically justifiable, than are our life-adjustments to the higher revelation. Science and religion are coordinate forms of life-adjustment. Both are necessary. Each is autonomous in its own sphere. The dualism in the criterion of explanation in science and religion is not primarily a dualism of thought, but a dualism of fact. Thought cannot become self-consistent until it recognizes the diverse data of the personal and physical spheres of reality.

3. The third paradox of Christ's authority is that he exerts his authority over us by transferring his authority to us. We have seen with what deference he approaches our personality. He claims us gently as the vine the trellis. He never overrides our will. His energy is delicate and multiform, pursuing the devious windings of thought and desire, percolating through to the inner recesses of our being. It is so varied, so intimate, and so personal, so restrained and yet so boundless; his authority is so absolute and yet so deferential and considerate of the peculiarities of our individuality, of that particular expression of the image of God in each of us that men rise up in their joy and run to meet it. Thus his lordship over us is not imposed upon men, but

discovered and chosen by them, and proclaimed as the true secret of being and defended as the final goal of life and pursued with passionate devotion. Now out of these experiences men rise into a sense of power. The sense of subjection to the lordship of another takes on the sense of the possession of much of the lordship of the other. Christ communicates his lordship to his church and thus she conquers the world. Nothing is more striking than this sense of spiritual lordship in the New Testament literature after the Gospels. The writings of Paul are simply amazing in this respect if we have the historical imagination necessary to perceive and feel their relations to their environment. His freedom in dealing with the greatest themes of life and destiny carries everywhere the note of authority. His language almost breaks down as he strives to express the fulness of the moral energy which is at work in him <sup>14</sup> and in the church. Thus it appears that men who think of submission as the sole attitude required by Jesus miss one of the chief points of his service for us. Submission to him is indeed involved in our relations to him, but properly understood that submission is simply conformity to the eternal law of our own being and of the moral universe. He makes us its discoverers; he emancipates, and because he emancipates his followers submit to him in undying loyalty.

And yet more is to be said. The method of

<sup>14</sup> Ephesians 1, 2.

Christ's lordship in a most gracious manner was designed in manifold ways to divest itself of everything which could shame us or affront our self-respect. The impulses to which he appeals in us all belong to the upper ranges of our nature. He tells men that their coming to him is due to their own response to light, their love of truth.<sup>15</sup> In receiving him men exercise the royal human prerogative of free choice, and a king's seal is employed as the symbol of that choice.<sup>16</sup> When the many forsake him through failure to find in him their carnal ideal, he turns to his own disciples, not with harsh rebuke or command, but with a magnanimous option, "Will ye also go away?" Their reply is: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."<sup>17</sup> Jesus says, indeed, that God gave him authority over all flesh, but adds at once the eternal vindication and glorification of the authority in the statement of its end: "That whatsoever thou hast given him, to them he should give eternal life."<sup>18</sup> His authority he makes synonymous with friendship and deals with his own on the level of a royal friendship.<sup>19</sup>

As if to forestall any and all attacks upon the nature of his authority, he expressly defines it thus on the basis of friendship. He assumes their capacity for truth as enabling them to grasp his

<sup>15</sup> John 3 : 21.

<sup>16</sup> John 3 : 33.

<sup>17</sup> John 6 : 67, 68.

<sup>18</sup> John 17 : 2.

<sup>19</sup> John 15 : 15.



revelation. He told them all that the Father told him.<sup>20</sup> The untold things will yet be told and the Comforter will be sent to make them plain.<sup>21</sup> They are to be given power to do greater works than he had done, and thus in practical efficiency his lordship was to be transferred to them.<sup>22</sup> He and the Father would come, he declared, and take up their abode in the believing heart.<sup>23</sup> As if his royalty would disrobe itself utterly of every vestige of the purple and the gold, he lives the incarnate life. He takes the form of a servant and achieves a new sovereignty over man by the things he suffered.<sup>24</sup> Self-emptying is thus the divine law and in our obedience and submission to him we simply imitate God. This was and is the method of the lordship of Jesus. It is the absolutely final and irreproachable authority of the supremely spiritual religion.

The completeness with which Jesus Christ fulfils the conditions of man's religious life appears in a striking saying in the Fourth Gospel. Jesus says: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."<sup>25</sup> If Christianity were a religion of authority only, it might be a way. If it were a philosophy or thought-system only, it might be the truth. If it were a spiritual inward experience without determinate form or meaning, such as mysticism seeks to establish, it might be a life. But since Christianity is not

<sup>20</sup> John 15 : 15.

<sup>21</sup> John 15 : 26.

<sup>22</sup> John 14 : 12.

<sup>23</sup> John 14 : 23.

<sup>24</sup> John 15 : 13; *Philippians* 2 : 5f.

<sup>25</sup> John 14 : 6.

one of these alone, but all three in conjunction, its Founder could sum up his functions in the religious life of man as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Religion must for its complete realization be a way, because it is ethical. A determinate course of conduct, an ideal of action, for the individual and society is part and parcel of religion. 'Again religion is and must be truth. For a determinate course of action, a way, is impossible save on the basis of a definite view of the world and of its ultimate meaning. Yet we have seen that speculative thought never yields a world-view stable enough or strong enough to carry the weight of man's religious life. Such world-views are always open to attack from the point of view of the opposite assumptions, so that the religions which build on philosophic world-views never get beyond the apologetic stage. They are not deeply and organically rooted and grounded in man's inner nature. They are rationalistic merely in their appeal. Hence the third of the functions asserted by Christ for himself in the above saying. He is the Life as well as the Truth and the Way. Now as life, primarily and fundamentally, Jesus becomes the truth and the way. As life he transcends ethics by grounding ethics first in God and then in the divine life in the soul. As life also, he transcends speculative thought by creating a new universe for the soul wherein new material is supplied for the construction of a new world-view. I have said that he transcends ethics and

philosophy. Yet we must add, he validates both. As the life he gathers up into himself all the phases, or *momenta*, of human culture into a new unity. The scattered fragments of life and thought he gathers up into himself and communicates in a living unity to those who obey him. Every lawful and proper form of culture Jesus includes in the noble synthesis of life which he brings to the spirit of man and to society.

As life in man of course Jesus must be interpreted. Thus arises our formulations of truth about him. The Truth then mediates between the Life and the Way. Thus also the religion of Christ becomes a religion of authority, since it is the religion of the way and of the truth. But it remains forever the religion of the Spirit also since it is the religion of the Life.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE IN CHRISTIANITY

In approaching the consideration of the place of the Bible in the Christian religion we need first to recall a few of the principles previously expounded which supply the foundation of the discussion: First, the general assumption that man's faculties are so related to the objective world that truth is discoverable by him; secondly, that in religious interaction with his spiritual environment, just as in his interaction with the cosmos, man acquires real knowledge; thirdly, the will is included in man's religious interaction with his spiritual environment, not, of course, to the exclusion of the intellect and emotions, all of which enter into the knowing process, but as an essential factor in our acquirement of religious truth; fourthly, the social law that the experience of one tends to become the experience of the many; fifthly, the inevitable crystallization or objectification of truth thus acquired in authoritative forms—forms which are authoritative and final precisely in the degree in which they are true.

Now in the foregoing truths, which, I trust, have been made sufficiently clear in the preceding pages, we have a complete vindication of the principle of

authority. Religion is no exception to the universal law. Authority arises in all spheres in the degree in which acquired truth finds legitimate outward forms of expression, whether in institutions, laws, or literatures. The character of the authority, of course, varies with the nature of the relationships involved. The Bible, then, is to be regarded as the outward literary expression of the truths acquired in man's interaction with the spiritual universe. Particular questions of revelation and inspiration will be considered farther on; here we seek to establish the principle of authority itself as applied to the Bible. Meantime we may declare that we are fully justified in employing the Bible as an authority in religion just in so far as it is the source whence we derive truth as to man's relations with God. The nature of religion, as we have seen, involves a personal relationship, on one side of which is God and on the other man. Personality and individuality must be respected in the ideal religious life. The Bible, however, as a literary expression of truth, may be privately and individually interpreted and verified. Moreover, it is the output, in its "divers portions and divers manners," of individual experience of God and his grace.

#### I. THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE LITERATURE AND THE LIFE

Our first conclusion then as to the authority of the Bible is that its authoritativeness is due to the

fact that it preserves and brings to us in literary form the truths acquired by mankind in the free interaction of its individual units with God. Of course there is a great deal more than this to be said. But it will help to clear the atmosphere if we perceive distinctly that a fundamental law of life and progress underlies the whole subject of an authoritative Bible.

The next point to be noted is the fundamental life-process by means of which this knowledge of God contained in the Bible arose. We saw in a previous chapter that religion is a life-adjustment; that it inevitably arises in man's unfolding life in some form or other. There is no more superficial view of religion than that which assumes that it only exists in legitimate forms as the result of a logical process. Logic does not create, it simply interprets. Life and life-adjustments supply the data which logic manipulates in a particular way for special ends. Logic does not and cannot create any of this material. That it must precede religion, or that nothing is justifiable in religion which we may not cast in syllogistic form and demonstrate mathematically, is one of the illusions of intellectualism. Truth and reality become known to us in all spheres, including the religious, in a far more organic and vital way. In his theory of thought and knowledge Professor Bowne says: "The method of rigor and vigor would doubt everything that can be doubted. The actual method is to assume the truthfulness of

our own nature and the nature of things, and to doubt nothing until we are compelled to doubt, to assume that everything is what it reports itself until specific reasons for doubt appear." He goes on to say that all fruitful work proceeds under this law. "Most speculative criticism and closet philosophy proceed under the contrary assumption. Hence their perennial barrenness." Professor Bowne says further: "Man is will, conscience, emotion, aspiration; and these are far more powerful factors than the logical understanding. Man is a practical being; . . . before he argues he must live. . . . This practical life has been the great source of human belief and the constant test of its practical validity; that is, of its truth." As to beliefs, he says: "While reason may be implicit in them, the reflective, analytic, and self-conscious reason commonly has little to do with their production. A good description of their origin would often be: they grew. This growing is the mind's reaction against its total experience, internal and external; it is the mental resultant of life."<sup>1</sup>

The next assertion concerning the Bible is that it came into existence in accordance with this principle which has been urged in so many ways in the pages of this work. This is a simple matter of fact. Behind the Bible lies a history. God spoke to Israel through the prophets with a view to immediate practical ends. All the revelation is rooted thus in

<sup>1</sup> "Theory of Thought and Knowledge," pp. 375, 376.

life. God was in the history first; then in the writers and speakers who delivered his messages to his people. Criticism has done nothing more valuable than to emphasize this relation of the truth to the life of Israel. The literature arose then as the expression of the life-adjustments and life-experiences. These experiences cover many centuries. They all belong to a particular type. Jehovah and man's relations to him are conceived in a particular way. There is a progressive unfolding of truth. There is advance in ethical ideals and standards. But the literature is homogeneous; allowing for varieties and levels of experience, the unity of the parts of this literature is unquestionable. Professor Sanday, after a very able historical discussion of the doctrine of inspiration points out how this collection of writings called the Bible and covering many centuries exhibits strong evidences, not only of a living relation of the Book to the life of the people, but also evidences of the presence of a "larger Mind," a "central Intelligence" which directs and gives unity and purpose to the scattered movements and driftings of men. He refers to such events as the recording of the messages of the prophets, and to the written Epistles of the New Testament, to many unquestionably Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, and other things, as illustrating and evincing the presence of this guiding central Intelligence.<sup>2</sup> We need not exhibit here the striking

<sup>2</sup> Sanday, "Inspiration," p. 402f.



details which show the unity and homogeneity of the Scriptures. This has often been done. The essential point we proceed to note.

The Scriptures are unified for us in Jesus Christ. He is the keystone in the arch. Without him the whole fabric loses its strength, and the Bible would lose its unique significance and value for us. But for Christ the messages of the prophets concerning God would not possess finality for the human race. Those messages were true, but they were not all the truth about God at any time. The revelation of Jesus was required to complete and validate them and to interpret and complete the Mosaic legislation also. We have already pointed out the fact that, apart from the revelation of God in Christ, all other forms of God's revelation of himself would be open to question for the reason that they might be regarded merely as so many attempts of man to find God. The Old Testament writers, we hold, were truly inspired of God. But the scientific critic, asserting that they were men like ourselves without capacity for the infinite and influenced in their views by tradition and environment, alleges that they simply give us one variety of human thought about God and not authoritative truth on the subject.

But Jesus Christ alters this situation. The New Testament is continuous with the Old. Its relation to the Old Testament is not one of opposition or contradiction, but of completion. Christ fulfils the Old Testament in the widest and pro-

foundest sense. We judge the beginnings and intermediate stages of the revelation by its crown. Jesus is the crown and goal of the Old Testament and the center of the New. Christ's revelation of God is authoritative and final because it comes to us from the divine side. We have shown that criticism, after doing its utmost, leaves the synoptic record of the transcendent Christ unshaken. We have also shown how Christ's present action in consciousness is a divine work. This divine work in us requires an interpretation of his person in terms inapplicable to any other, both in his relations to God and to man. Unless we thus construe his person from his function, what he is from what he does, then we have not only no theory of knowledge, but no knowledge. We deliver religion over to agnosticism and label it as a make-believe, and thus write its doom in an age which hates shams.

As a consequence of the revelation of God in Christ, we have then two things: First, a life, and secondly, a literature. The literature is the record of the life and its experiences, its interpretation and explanation. We have a history in which God was revealing himself to man, and a record of his dealings and the truths revealed. The life of the New Testament believers was continuous with that of the inner and higher element in the life of Israel in its essential features. The spiritual life of Christians to-day is continuous with

the life of Old and New Testament saints. This unique and clearly defined type of spiritual experience has thus become deeply rooted in human history.

Now, in the view of the present writer, the doctrine of Scripture can best be stated and justified only as we keep in mind the two facts involved, the existence of a spiritual order on the one hand, and of a literature of that order of life on the other. Most of the confusion of thought regarding the authority of the Scriptures has grown out of a failure to discriminate clearly these two facts and their relations to each other. The literature has been treated as if it were the life, or the life has been confounded with the literature. The cause which produced both the life and the literature has been identified with the literature. So also the disputants have often overlooked the point just how the literature is dependent on the life and how the life is dependent on the literature. The life has been exalted as if the literature were nothing, or the literature has been exploited as if the life were nothing.

How then are the life and the literature related to each other? First, we say the life preceded the literature historically. The power of the risen Christ created the early church before the latter created the literature of Christian experience which we have in the New Testament. Jesus is often preached in a saving way to men who never read

the Bible. Missionaries gain converts often prior to the existence of a Bible in the language of the converts. Herrmann emphasizes the synoptic picture of Jesus as the medium of God's regenerating grace. And so it may be and often is. But God in Christ acts directly on the soul. He is not limited to the written record. The truth proclaimed by the living voice and the divine energy in the soul work the change. The authority of Christ and his power then are primary, underneath the record as a bedrock supporting it.

Looking at the matter from the other side we also assert that the literature is indispensable to the life. The life under the Spirit's guidance produced the literature as its necessary expression. The rise of the life in turn always creates a demand for the literature in order that it may be nourished and guided. Literature is essential to the life in another vital sense, viz., that only a literature could give us the original form of the revelation in its purity and distinctness. This is a very important fact overlooked by many. Literature, or recorded thoughts, is the nearest approach to the nature of spirit which we possess which is at the same time reliable as a medium of transmission. Tradition is utterly unsafe. The Roman Catholic doctrine of tradition is the concrete proof of the assertion. Unwritten tradition is always colored and transformed by the medium through which it passes. An unwritten gospel would be subject to all the fluctua-

tions of the spiritual life of man and most likely to gravitate downward from the spiritual to the carnal and formal. Institutions may symbolize or embody truth, but without a written standard they always tend to become external means of grace, or sacraments. They are ladders on which we may climb up or down. Without a corrective it is usually down.

Again, reason could not be trusted to preserve the truth about Christ after the incarnation and completed revelation. Unless the revelation through the life was reported by those in close relations with the Redeemer, the preservation of the redemptive truth could scarcely be expected. For so soon as the revelation became a fact lying in a past age, the same necessity for a revelation and incarnation as that which originally existed would reassert itself. A new incarnation would be required in order to bring God to man. A reliable record of the original revelation, however, obviates this necessity. This is not to put the literature in the place of the Redeemer, but only to assert that the literature is a necessary medium for the transmission to us of a knowledge of him. Thus, in the first instance, for generations subsequent to Christ, the literature comes as the vehicle of objective truth about him and his salvation; but, in the second place, it serves as a means for the expression of the life we have in Christ.

It thus appears that the relations between the

literature and the life of which it is the expression must never be overlooked in defining the function of the Bible, if we are to avoid confusion of thought and an unsatisfactory conclusion. In the light of those relations it appears how very groundless are the charges often made by the subjectivists against those who hold to the doctrine of an authoritative Bible. One charge is that they are "bibliolaters," worshipers of a book, or that they interpose a book between the soul and God. It is easy to understand how the charge arises. The objector proceeds rationalistically against one or another of the various theories of inspiration. "It is absurd," he argues, "to thrust anything between the soul and God, even an alleged sacred book." The arguments in support of inspiration are not convincing to him, and until his reason is convinced he has no ground for a rational belief in the Bible as an authority. The conclusion is inevitable, and the Bible is rejected as in any sense authoritative.

Now what has the objector done in this method of approach to the Bible? He has simply severed the literature from the life which gives it significance, and has judged the literature thus isolated from its true context in the life, and apart from its function. The outcome is directly opposed to the facts. For the literature cannot be understood in isolation from the life. The Bible is not an opaque veil thrust between the soul and God. It is the record rather of the experiences of the men who have had the

direct vision of God. Christ is the revelation of God and the key to all Scripture. Scripture then is not a veil, but a rent in the veil between man and God, for its function is to lead to Christ. Here were men who found God in a living experience. They must needs record what they saw and felt and knew. The Bible is the result. Their written records are thus the fastenings which hold open the sides of the rent veil, not a veil obscuring God. The telescope is interposed between the eye and the heavenly body. The astronomer is not accused of worshipping the telescope or advised to pursue the science of astronomy without its aid. The telescope tells him what he could never discover without it. He relies upon it as an "authority," and carries forward the discoveries of science. Thus it appears that the objector to an authoritative Bible is on the wrong scent altogether. He is unconvinced by arguments for an infallible or inerrant Bible, or he is unwilling to accept the decree of the early councils which may be supposed to have fixed the canon of Scripture. From these premises he proceeds to the attempt to convict the others of bibliolatry. But he has missed the point entirely. He has torn the Bible away from its true context in its own spiritual order and judged it thus.

If, however, men look through this rent in the veil, that is, the biblical writings, and thus obtain the vision of God and find redemption through his power in their lives, they simply repeat the experiences of

the men who first had the experiences and were inspired to write the Bible. For them the Bible is authoritative because it leads them to God and relates them to the redemptive forces. To argue against the authority of the Bible, therefore, to men who have had the life-adjustment and life-experience which it enshrines, is like arguing against the symmetry of the Venus de Milo or the beauty of the Sistine Madonna to the artistic soul, on the ground of some defect in the material or the mechanical execution.

Suppose, on the other hand, we reject the literature in the interest of the life and seek to maintain the life apart from the literature. Not a few would fain pursue this method. Why not go directly to Christ, since he is available apart from the Scriptures, and be rid once for all of controversies about a book? The reply is supplied by history. The proposed program has been carried out in several ways. I name two. First, the ecclesiastical. Roman Catholicism pursued its course through the Middle Ages in practical independence of the written records. What was the result? The worship of the Virgin Mary and the saints, along with the development of a sacramental system which eclipsed the Christ of the New Testament, and of a hierarchy which destroyed human freedom.

A second attempt has been the rationalistic. Who and what was Jesus Christ? This is the permanent question of rationalism. It has not answered the



question finally after two thousand years. This is inevitable apart from an authentic record of Christ's life and work. A very little reflection shows that without such a record the problem of Christ becomes as inconclusive as the speculative problem as to God. Approached rationalistically the problem of God always ends in an unstable equilibrium of theories, as we have abundantly seen. In the same manner precisely the problem of Jesus, apart from an authentic record, ends in a permanently unstable equilibrium. The outcome of this method then is the end of the spiritual order of experience of which the New Testament is the organ and literary expression. That is to say, historical Christianity would be destroyed. It ought to be plain, then, to all that the question of destroying belief in the authority of the Bible is primarily a deeper question altogether, viz., whether it is possible to destroy that order of spiritual life and experience which we call Christian. And to those who share in the life and experience the proposal to abolish it is about equivalent to the proposal to abolish the daylight.

## 2. THE FORMATION OF THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE

So much for the relations between the life and the literature in general. We propose now to pursue the subject further in connection with certain specific problems.

First as to the formation of the canon of Scrip-

ture. It does not fall within our plan to trace the history of the canon. We simply offer an interpretation. We begin by the statement that early church councils which made declarations as to the canon of Scripture are no more authoritative than any other similar councils. This means that they had no authority at all to legislate for the conscience. Yet the reproach is constantly thrown at Christians that they pin their faith in the canon to groups of ecclesiastics who sat in council in the early centuries, and thus build the whole fabric of faith on the infallibility of these councils. This method of arguing, however, reverses the facts of history. Early church councils are misunderstood if they are thought of as bodies possessing binding authority to which modern believers must bow. In so far as their decisions are intelligently accepted by Christians of to-day, they simply registered the common convictions of the Christian community. Here again the life explains the literature. The books retained in Scripture were homogeneous books expressive of the spiritual life-experiences of the Christian community. Books alien in spirit to these books were excluded from the canon. Sometimes books found place in the canon which were alien in spirit or defective in the claim to apostolicity, or unsuited to purposes of worship, and they were afterward excluded. The Apocrypha constitutes such a collection of books. If the present canon of Scripture should be disintegrated, no doubt the

parts would coalesce again into the living unity of the Bible, since they are parts of a congruous whole. This would require no authority of council or ecclesiastical decree. It would take place through the operation of a law of spiritual affinity. There are those who doubt whether Second Peter and one or two other New Testament books along with Esther, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon in the Old Testament are entitled to a place in the canon. But this does not affect the larger fact of a homogeneous Bible. There was included a twofold criterion in the formation of the New Testament canon; first, apostolicity and, secondly, spiritual congruity or agreement with the Christian experience. The books accepted were those regarded as being derived from apostles or apostolic men, eye-witnesses or the associates of the eye-witnesses of Jesus in his earthly life. This was the external principle. Along with it, however, was the inward principle which corresponds to the outward. The agreement of the life with the literature is manifest to us to-day, since we possess both.<sup>3</sup>

Now the above is not set forth as a process of reasoning to prove a point logically. It is simply the statement of facts.<sup>4</sup> The spiritual life behind and underneath along with the apostolicity of the books was the guiding principle in the formation of

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wescott, "The Canon of the New Testament," introduction and pp. 508f.

<sup>4</sup> See Wescott, "The Canon of the New Testament," pp. 12, 13, 56-58, 273-275, 333-335, 345, 352f., 355f.

the New Testament canon, not plenary ecclesiastical authority. This does not at all make of the Christian consciousness the ultimate authority. It is not as if men apart from God fixed the canon. The divine cause which created the life created also the literature, but it created the literature in and through the medium of the life. There is more to be said on this point farther on. Meantime we clear the point that the life and the literature are the joint product of the Spirit revealing God in Christ to men. Other and subsequent literature of Christian experience is not inspired or authoritative in the same sense for various reasons. One is that other literature was produced farther from the causal energy, the historic Christ. The historic foundation of Christianity gives its unique position to the original literature. No later writings can compete with the New Testament because none of these can give first-hand information as to the historic facts. Copies of a photograph, or copies of copies of the photograph of a man cannot be exalted in reliability above the negative made by the photographer from the original himself. Observe also that subsequent literature is on a lower level. The spiritual and intellectual inferiority of sub-apostolic literature is an outstanding fact of the most remarkable kind. The power has departed. Again, it is strikingly true that this original literature has a creative power unparalleled by any other. It was created along with the life and continues to possess the creative

power, or rather continues to be the creative instrument of the original power. It is this parity of the literature with the life, this divine level of the literature which identifies it in origin with the original creative energy which made the Christian religion.

### 3. THE FUNCTION OF CRITICISM

We consider next the function of criticism in the light of the principle we are advocating, viz., the interdependence of the Christian life and the Christian literature. Criticism, as we have previously seen, is an inalienable intellectual right of man. To deny this is as foolish as it is futile. Much might be said of the follies of criticism. Yet on the whole it has done excellent service and achieved very substantial results. The revised theories as to the authorship and dates of certain books are by no means fully established at all points. The composite nature of some books seems to be clearly made out; that is, the view that the writers employed previously existing documents in composing them. Inspiration did not create what was unnecessary. It employed what was found ready to hand. These results of criticism, however, are not the most valuable. Certainly nothing so far achieved excludes necessarily the inspiration of Scripture. Other and higher results of criticism are: First, the clear exhibition of the progress of revelation from lower to higher stages; secondly, the unity and homogeneous-

ness of the Bible as a collection of sacred writings; thirdly, the presence of a superhuman power in the life of the people from which the biblical literature came; and fourthly, the close connection between the literature and the life. Criticism has also served to emphasize the presence of the human medium of revelation and human forms of expression with which the truth clothed itself.

We may sum up by saying criticism has been a rational process applied to the sacred literature. But this rational, critical process has not obscured the fact that there has proceeded all along the life-experiences and life-adjustments of the spiritual order in which the literature took its rise. With what result? One result has failed of proper recognition, viz., that the life-experiences have, by means of criticism, been brought into extraordinary clearness over against criticism. The things that cannot be shaken have been demonstrated, have been made to stand forth in distinctness of outline and granitic strength amid the disturbances and confusion of critical theories. In other words, a counter-criticism has sprung up, the criticism of rationalism by life. Since the Bible arose in and through a spiritual life, and in turn creates life; and since life is always more than rationalism, as inclusive of all human interests and enlisting all human faculties and powers; and since life always has the last word against rationalism, therefore, criticism could not prevail against life. Criticism

at first thought it would disintegrate the Bible and it accomplished certain other results. But it was shattered, in its radically destructive tendencies, against life itself, and has in large measure become a spent force. The fiery furnace in which the Bible has been tried, the profoundest and most searching of all criticism of the Bible has been, not rationalism or the historico-scientific method, but man's religious life itself.

Here again, therefore, we see how very closely intertwined and interrelated are the welfare of the literature and that of the life of which it is the expression. While thus closely related the spiritual experience is not to be confounded with the Bible. Spiritual energies are at work in the soul of the Christian directly and immediately. This constitutes the most vital and fundamental fact for him. No sort of altered views of other things alters his knowledge of this fact. This is not to assert that if the Bible were destroyed, his faith would remain. There is no need to present such an alternative. For him the Bible cannot be destroyed, since it performs a function in his life which the rational-critical process never touches at all. Now if his faith were really what is so often falsely alleged, that is, nothing more than a "holding for true" a certain book called the Bible, a belief established by means of ordinary logic and expressed in some elaborate formal theory, it might indeed be quite vulnerable from critical attacks, the degree of vul-

nerability being dependent upon the weakness or strength of the logical process supporting the particular form of theory. But this is not at all the process by which the Christian arrives at his belief in the inspiration and authority of the Bible. He has the life apart from the Bible, and a Bible apart from the life. But the Bible so clearly expresses the life and so clearly claims for itself divine origin, and it has in addition such power to produce the life in others, that the life and the book of life mutually reenforce and confirm each other. It is at once the apartness and the interdependence of the life and the book which gives such power to the Christian conviction, despite all rationalistic processes which may be applied to the Scriptures. The one thing criticism has done has been to demonstrate the vital manner in which the biblical writings are rooted in the life of the biblical people.

In connection with this topic of criticism, we may answer another question already referred to elsewhere. It is whether or not faith is dependent upon a historical judgment; whether, as Lessing asserted, we are independent of the historical in our spiritual life. We have seen how Herrmann sought to answer the question. He strives hard to emancipate Christianity from the historical judgment and complains that his adversaries falsely charge him with so doing. Yet he makes faith dependent on the synoptic portrait of Jesus. The true state of the case was not clearly apprehended by Herrmann. It



is this: Faith is not dependent upon a bare historical judgment; yet the historical judgment is indispensable to faith. The reasons are as follows: First, it is not because the historical judgment as to Christ is unconvincing, so far as the evidence is concerned. No historical judgment ever was more convincing. The utmost criticism can do leaves it unshaken. Men withhold assent not on the score of evidence, but because the "option" is so vital, the issue is so tremendous. The whole meaning of history, and of the cosmos, and of human destiny is at stake in the question as to the person of Christ. Men instinctively draw back from a bare historical judgment in the decision of so momentous an issue. That the evidence as such is convincing we have seen, since critics by the score eliminate the factors of the momentous option, the supreme issue, and then proceed without hesitation to accept the evidence in proof of other matters. The evidence in their view is ample for a merely human Christ, but not for a transcendent Christ. Again, we assert, faith is not dependent upon a bare historical judgment because a judgment of this kind, if there were nothing more, would convert faith into rational belief merely. It is against this that Herrmann so strongly protests. Faith is far more than rational belief, although of course it implies and involves rational beliefs. Rational beliefs about religion, however, might exist in any degree without the necessary presence of religion at all. Implicit in Herrmann's protest against

the historical judgment is this reaction against rationalism, and along with this the demand for the immediately given, the empirically real, in the momentous issues of religion.

Now our own solution of the problem is found in the principle we are here advocating: First, the apartness, and secondly, the interdependence of the life and the literature. The Christian religion is not merely a "holding for true" of the Bible or anything else, although it does hold the Bible as true; it is rather the living experience of God in Christ. Yet we must have the revelation of God in Christ in order to the experience. The living experience and not the historical judgment is the sphere in which the momentous issues are finally settled. Without the living experience the historical judgment would not convince. But this would not be due to lack of evidence, but to the character of the objects to which the evidence refers. We have then the immediately given, the empirical evidence in living experience, which is essential to the effectiveness of the historical judgment. Our religious life, then, is not dependent on a historical judgment nor is it independent of that judgment. Or we could state it positively by saying it is both dependent on and independent of the historical judgment: dependent, because we must be brought into relations with the historical Christ in order to the vital experience; independent, because the experience is distinct from the historical belief, being an immediately given fact,

a creation of the living Christ in our life and consciousness. Each then requires the other and each is insufficient without the other.

#### 4. THE REFORMATION DOCTRINE OF 'AUTHORITY

Our next topic is the Reformed doctrine of an authoritative Scripture. Here, again, we do not trace the history in detail, but interpret simply. It is often urged to-day that Luther and Calvin were essentially subjectivists in their views of religious truth, and that modern Protestantism is wrong in claiming them as advocates of an authoritative Bible. Two tendencies in fact have marked thought on the subject during the last few generations. One has been that characterized as Protestant Scholasticism. It has wrought out elaborate rationalistic schemes to prove the authority of the Bible. These have in some instances been so complex and intricate as to expose them to attack at many points. The Bible thus accepted as a rational belief has been made to take the place of Christ in effect if not avowedly. On the other hand has been the tendency to an exclusively subjective criterion of religious truth, and the Reformers, especially Luther and Calvin, have been claimed as having abolished once for all the idea of an objective authority in Christianity. Sabatier asserts this with vigor. Referring to the Reformers he says: "Their title to fame is that they established a new conception of religion by removing the seat of religious authority

from without to within, from the church to the Christian consciousness." <sup>5</sup>

The situation which has arisen out of these two tendencies is that on the one hand we have an undue minimizing of vital experience, and on the other a misleading construction of the Reformation view of Scripture. The rationalistic scholastics exalt the letter of outward Scripture and the Bible as an objective fact, in a way which fails to observe the necessary inwardness and vitality of the Christian religion. The subjectivists on the other hand refuse to recognize the function of the Bible in and for the spiritual life, and set forth a radical view of the criterion of truth which logically undermines Christianity. The true view is to be found here again by taking into account the apartness and the interdependence of the literature and the life. This distinction explains also the views of Luther and Calvin. It is true that neither of these Reformers developed the doctrine of an authoritative Scripture fully. Yet their writings yield sufficient evidence as to the main point.

Now so far as the evidence goes there is no indication that the Reformers formally adopted a subjective as *opposed* to an objective criterion of truth. Such an antithesis did not occur to them at all. Sometimes indeed they made reference to the Bible apart from the inward witness of the Spirit, and at

<sup>5</sup> Sabatier, "Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit," p. 160. See also pp. 156, 157, 161.

others to the inward witness of the Spirit apart from the Bible. But they held the written word and the word within as correlatives, not as opposing members of an antithesis. In Luther's treatise on "Christian Liberty" this is especially manifest. Everywhere he makes faith depend on the "word of God" which comes from without. And yet everywhere through this word which faith grasps the Christian is made free. He says: "One thing, and that only, can affect the life, the righteousness, the liberty of the Christian—and that is the most holy word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ."<sup>6</sup> Again: "This then we may consider as a fixed and absolute certainty, that the soul may endure the want of everything but the word of God. Deprived of this, it cannot receive benefit from any one thing; but having this, it is rich, wanting nothing." Luther defines the word as the "Gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord," etc.<sup>7</sup> Everywhere in these passages and throughout the treatise Luther cites numerous passages from the Bible to prove each point in his argument. Repeatedly he shows that the outward word is the necessary medium and instrument of the grace of God. But with equal uniformity and force he asserts the inward and vital nature of Christian experience and the direct action of God in Christ upon the soul. The outward

<sup>6</sup> "*Sacrosanctum verbum dei, evangelium Christi.*"

<sup>7</sup> Cited from translation of Luther's treatise, "*De Libertate Christiana*," in Wace's "Foundations of Faith," p. 342f.

word and the inward life are correlatives. The word comes to man; faith responds to it, and life enters the soul.

Calvin, in the "Institutes," outlines his view of the Bible more fully and formally than does Luther. He makes the witness of the Spirit within our chief evidence for the truth of Scripture, but he clearly regards the external Scriptures as performing their own independent function in Christianity. For example, he says: "The light of the divine countenance is like an inexplicable labyrinth to us, unless we are directed by the line of the word; so that it were better to halt this way than to run with the greatest rapidity out of it."<sup>8</sup> Again he says: "But since we are not favored with daily oracles from heaven, and since it is only in the Scriptures that the Lord hath been pleased to preserve this truth in perpetual remembrance, it obtains the same complete credit and authority with believers, when they are satisfied of its divine origin, as if they heard the very words pronounced by God himself."<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless Calvin insists that the internal witness of the Spirit to the truth of the Scriptures is the most fundamental evidence of their truth: "If we wish to consult the true interest of our consciousness, that they may not be unstable and wavering, the subjects of perpetual doubt; . . . this persuasion must be sought from a higher source than human reasons or

<sup>8</sup> "Institutes," Vol. I, p. 74, Memorial Ed., 1909.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

judgments or conjectures—even from the secret testimony of the Spirit.”<sup>10</sup> Again: “I reply, that the testimony of the Spirit is superior to all reason. For, as God alone is sufficient witness of himself in his own word, so also the word will never gain credit in the hearts of men, till it be confirmed by the internal testimony of the Spirit.”<sup>11</sup>

We need not multiply citations. Calvin leaves no room for question as to the relative places of the inner witness of the Spirit and the outward word. He never dreams of abolishing the external authority of Scripture or of merging it in the inner witness of the Spirit. Nor does he dream of making men see the truth of the external word apart from the internal witness of the Spirit. He gathers up both ideas into the unity of a larger conception, namely, the redeeming activity of God in Christ. Then he thinks of the resultant life of the redeemed, and of a Scripture which is the authentic and authoritative record and interpretation of the life. It is the organic unity, as it were, of both the literature and the life in the redeeming Christ who stands behind and above both, which explains the view of the Reformers. The modern rationalistic subjectivist who seeks to interpret the facts apart from this supreme fact inevitably goes astray.

It is often argued that because Luther and Calvin adopted a critical attitude toward the prevailing views as to the canon of Scripture that they were

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

subjectivists on the question of authority in religion. Calvin omitted the Second and Third Epistles of John and the book of Revelation from his commentary, and doubted whether Peter wrote the Second Epistle bearing his name. Luther, as is well known, was very free in his dealing with certain New Testament books. His characterization of the Epistle of James as "a right strawy epistlè" has been quoted innumerable times in recent discussions. The Lutheran Church even to-day has no recognized definition of canonicity and no express list of the sacred books.

But we must keep clearly in mind here that the question of an authoritative Scripture cannot be confounded with the question of the method of obtaining a definitely fixed canon. It would be absurd to assert, for example, that if the non-apostolic origin of Second Peter were to be proved beyond a peradventure, this would discredit the whole of the New Testament. From the very days which followed the death of the apostles there has been a narrow borderland of discussion with reference to a very few of our New Testament books. The evidence was not equally convincing to all regarding all the books. In the view of this writer the final view which gave us our present New Testament was essentially the correct one. Yet had the decision of the matter been different in some particulars, could any one on that score logically conclude that the doctrine of an authorita-



tive Scripture was destroyed? The truth is that no matter how the canon of Scripture is settled its authoritativeness abides when it is settled. And even if the final resultant canon should consist of a fixed core and a somewhat indefinite fringe around it, we would still have an authoritative Scripture. Some apocryphal books crept into the canon in the early centuries, and they were gradually eliminated. The same process is conceivable now, though not likely; yet it would not undermine the authority of the Bible. Even in a case like that of the Lutheran Church, where the question of the canon has never been formally settled, there may be and is a very workable and real principle in operation. The actual use of the books in such a case would be the practical method of fixing the canon.

#### 5. THE PROTESTANT AND ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES OF AUTHORITY

We consider next the question whether Protestantism in standing for an authoritative Bible adopts the Roman Catholic principle of authority. This is the standing charge of the subjectivists against the evangelical wing of modern Christians. Let it be asserted then at the outset that the charge is groundless. Indeed, nothing could be farther from the truth.

First, we point out that it is based primarily on an abstract and quite general assumption which is false. The assumption is that all forms of authority in

religion are necessarily alike. Since the Roman Catholic form is the most thorough-going and complete, therefore, all religious authorities are essentially identical in character with the Roman Catholic. This is a totally false view. The only point of agreement is the bare fact of an external norm or standard. This, indeed, keeps the Bible in the place of an authority and brings it as such under the fire of the subjectivists. But when this is said all is said which is in any way analogous to the Roman Catholic principle. We have previously developed this thought in part. Here we continue it.

Let us keep in mind the thought of the apartness and interdependence of the literature and the life. This will shed light on the antithesis between the two principles of authority. First, then, Roman Catholic authority has to do with institutionalized grace, while the biblical authority has to do with personalized grace. Salvation on the Roman Catholic view requires union with the Church. The Bible requires, be it observed, not formal belief of its teachings, but union with Christ. The function of the Bible is not at all primarily to get its teachings accepted, but rather to lead the soul to living contact with the Redeemer, and thus to an awakening of the whole nature, emotional, volitional, intellectual. To get men to bow down to the mere letter of Scripture apart from vital faith would be a melancholy defeat of all the Bible stands for. A submission of this kind, however, is just what the

Roman Catholic authority requires. The sacraments have power in themselves, as do the priests. The inner awakening and response of the soul is not only not required, it is actually forestalled by the nature of the submission required. The less thought, the less mental activity, the more absolute and implicit the faith, the greater the efficacy. Priests, sacraments, and institutions are not religious objects which require as their correlatives a spirit awakened in all its powers, but rather passive and submissive.

The function of the Scriptures on the contrary is to correlate the soul with the living Redeemer. Its plea is not for a grace mediated indirectly through material sacraments, but directly in and through the living Spirit. Grace then becomes a fact in the realm of mind and spirit, while in the case of Romanism it is alleged to be a fact in the realm of matter. No antithesis could be more complete. In the one case the soul is incompetent, in the other it is competent to deal directly with God. In the Roman Catholic scheme a sacramental veil is hung between the soul and God; in the Protestant a rent is made in the veil in order to the direct vision of God in Christ. It is only by ignoring the relations between the Bible and the spiritual life, their apartness and interdependence, that a Roman Catholic function can be plausibly attributed to it. If salvation were simply the "holding for true" of Bible statements, then it

might be so argued. But since this is quite the reverse of the truth in the matter, since the function of the Bible is to carry men entirely beyond itself to a fundamentally new adjustment of the soul and life, no such interpretation is at all legitimate.

Another sharp contrast between Roman Catholic and biblical authority is that the former suppresses while the latter exalts the individual. Roman Catholicism is first social and then individual; Protestantism is first individual and then social. The history of civilization since the Reformation proves this. The solidarity which exists and is required in Romanism proves it. The diversity which exists and is inevitable in Protestantism proves it. The distinction accounts for the diverse ideals of the Roman Catholic and Protestant forms of modern civilization. Protestantism creates a social order based on intelligence and individualism. Romanism produces a social order based on submission and the suppression of individualism. The Modernist movement in the Roman Catholic Church proves this.

All the preceding is simply another way of saying that the biblical authority requires the exercise of the judicial quality in the individual, while the Roman Catholic suppresses it. The biblical appeal is a challenge to all our powers. No one thinks of compelling acceptance of the Bible. Critics and deniers exist all about us. The biblical ideal never

for a moment, if it is consistently applied, questions the right of men to freedom of thought. It rather assumes man's capacity through grace to know God and urges men to claim the knowledge, to judge the revelation, to enter upon the life. A fallacy which lurks in many minds is that the judicial faculty has but one function, viz., that of criticism, and that to judge Scripture is necessarily to reject it. This is wholly erroneous. The judicial process involves approval as well as rejection. In it a man may discover truth or error. Thousands upon thousands of men have passed through all stages of the judicial process in their dealing with the truths of Scripture. Doubt, rejection, and unbelief have been succeeded by acceptance and a most buoyant spiritual life. Here again the Bible functions not as urging itself upon men's acceptance on rationalistic grounds, but by pointing away from itself and the letter to the spiritual readjustment in and through Christ, to the spiritual life of which it is the literary expression.

There are two rights involved then in our attitude to the Bible, the right to reject and the right to approve and accept. In the latter case its truth and authoritativeness are discovered. The soul knows that in it God speaks. To bow to his authority as thus revealed is the supreme joy of life. This book is then seen to be the result of the exercise of the right of men to record freely under God's guidance the meaning of their life in Christ. The reverence for the literature arises from the

identity of the life of the writers and the readers of the Bible. Moreover, in opposition to the Roman Catholic principle, thenceforth the life is a free life in Christ—free in all respects—from priests and sacraments and ecclesiasticisms; from civic authorities in religion; from scientific absolutism; free from all forms of tyranny, indeed. It is free, moreover, on the positive side: to investigate, to accept any truth from any source, free to live its own life “under the eye and in the strength of God,” free in short to adjust itself to the new spiritual universe in which it finds itself. As it cannot and desires not to escape the operation of the laws of nature, so it desires not to escape the operation of the life-principle in Christ. And as life must have its literature, so the Bible stands secure as the authoritative literature of the life.

#### 6. THEORIES OF INSPIRATION

We consider briefly next the conception of an authoritative Bible and theories of inspiration. Here we are in a position to simplify the discussion by means of a fundamental distinction. All modern views of inspiration take their departure from the person and work of Christ. All other questions are merely incidental and subsidiary to this fundamental issue. If Jesus was simply the “prince of saints” and nothing more, a merely human Christ with no transcendent relations to God and man, then we have a minimum gospel, which requires only a

synoptic portrait, and which can easily dispense with the Pauline and Johannine elements in the New Testament.

Let us make this point perfectly clear that it is the question of the person and work of Christ which modern theories of inspiration either explicitly or implicitly assume as the starting-point. All parties are agreed in holding that in the Old Testament we have a gradual disclosure of truth; that the ethical ideals and the conception of God and religion in Israel were gradually clarified and slowly lifted into greater purity. But all alike perceive that the decision of the question of whether or not Old Testament literature is to be regarded as a merely natural development or a supernatural revelation will turn very largely on the view which is held as to Christ's relations to the Old Testament. He is its crown and goal. But the question is whether he is its natural or its supernatural crown and goal. Again the question whether the eschatological elements in the synoptic Gospels are to be regarded as in any sense authoritative declarations of truth will hinge especially on the prior question of who and what was Jesus. So also the inspiration of the apostle Paul and other New Testament interpreters of Jesus apart from the writers of the synoptic Gospels will in great measure depend upon the view held as to the relations they sustained to Christ: was he simply the "prince of saints" and they earnest students of religion who were drawn

within the circle of his influence; or was he divine Redeemer and Lord, risen and reigning, and guiding them into truth? I do not think the point I am here emphasizing will be seriously questioned. Certainly it could be easily established, if it were necessary, by a general survey of recent literature on the inspiration of the Bible.

Keeping in mind then the central place of Jesus in theories of inspiration we may classify those theories in a threefold way. First, the radical view; secondly, the conservative view; and thirdly, the compromise view. We need not spend much time on the radical view. It rejects the authority of Jesus in religion altogether and therewith the authority of the Bible. In this view Jesus takes his place along with Socrates, Plato, and Gautama as one of the many religious geniuses of history. The Bible represents simply one type of the general phenomena of religion with no unique or supreme excellence as compared with the books of other religions. If revelation be a fact at all, it is simply the disclosure on the ordinary natural plane of experience of such truths as man in his struggle for existence may be able to grasp. The underlying world-view emphasizes the immanence to the exclusion of the transcendence of God. It admits of no conception of revelation and inspiration consistent with a genuine theism, but rather carries at its heart a pantheistic view of the world. It applies in a thorough-going way the scientific criterion of



continuity, and with this as its chief tool of thought, seeks to build up a completely rational view of religion. Of course, this view rejects wholly the idea of authority in religion. Martineau and more recently Prof. G. B. Foster in America and Professor Bousset in Europe are among the many advocates of this general type of opinion, not to mention numerous idealistic philosophers who ignore the value of the historical elements of Christianity altogether. Dominant in the thinking of all this group is the rationalistic rather than the experiential and empirical ideal for the establishment of religious truth.

Now, as this work is not primarily an apologetic, we do not undertake to refute this view beyond what has appeared in our previous argument. We are concerned here with the principle of authority. We have justified that principle on universally valid grounds. Unless truth in religion becomes objective and authoritative, then there is no real discovery of truth in religion, much less revelation. And if there is no objective truth in religion, then there is no known object in religion, and religion thus becomes a mere subjective play of the emotions. The rationalistic view leaves religion unreal and empty and devoid of real power. We, therefore, pass to the consideration of the other two views, the conservative and the compromise view as to the inspiration and authority of the Scripture.

First, we note the conservative view. This presents itself in two forms which proceed in very

different ways, but which arrive at results which do not radically differ. These are what we shall describe with Professor Sanday in his work on "Inspiration" as the Inductive and the Traditional theories of inspiration. The traditional view is that built up by scholastic Protestantism. We outline it briefly in its extreme form in order to indicate its essential characteristics, as follows: It begins with an abstract principle not derived from Scripture, which conceives of the biblical writers as mere unintelligent instruments or pens used by the Holy Spirit to dictate the truths of revelation. The Bible speaks, according to this view, with equal authority on science and related subjects as upon religion. A single mistake in matters of science would invalidate the authority of the Bible. Even the Hebrew vowel-points were inspired of God in the Old Testament equally with the consonants and the language generally. This will sufficiently characterize the view. There are, of course, various modifications of it as stated needless to mention here. Its laudable aim is to preserve and maintain the authority of the Scripture as the word of God.

The Inductive view proceeds in another way, but arrives at a similar general result. It refuses to adopt any abstract or *a priori* starting-point, but rather goes directly to the Bible itself for the evidence of its own inspiration. Its watchword is conformity to the testimony of Scripture as to the inspiration of Scripture. In other words, it gathers

the data from the Bible and on them builds up its view of the authority of the Bible. This view recognizes that God was in the history as well as in the literature; that he spoke to Israel through the prophets; that Jesus Christ is the supreme and final revelation of God; that miracles and the supernatural must be admitted as a part of God's method of revelation; that the Scriptures are the final and sufficient and authoritative record of God's revelation; and that when we have correctly interpreted the Scriptures we have found God's truth for our religious life. This view emphasizes the fact, however, that the biblical writers employed the language and forms of speech in common use in their own age to convey their religious message from God; that primarily the Bible is a religious and not a scientific book; that we must not look for authoritative deliverances on questions about physical nature in the Bible; and, indeed, that premature revelations of science through prophets and apostles would not only have robbed man of his own proper task of investigation, but would have defeated the ends of revelation by introducing a needless confusion of science and religion.

On the other hand this must not be taken to justify the sweeping assertions as to error and discrepancy so often made about the Scripture. As Dr. James Orr, who holds the inductive view, well says: "Ascribe it to 'Providence,' to 'superin-

tendence,' to 'suggestion,' or what one will—and inspiration is probably more subtle and all-pervading than any of these things—it remains the fact that the Bible, impartially interpreted and judged, is free from demonstrable error in its statements, and harmonious in its teachings, to a degree that of itself creates an irresistible impression of a supernatural factor in its origin."<sup>12</sup> The inductive view of course takes account of the various literary forms and media, such as the parable and the allegory; it allows for the distinction between literal and figurative passages; and for the pedagogic adaptation of the method and means of revelation to the state of mind and degree of religious maturity of hearer and reader. The advocates of the inductive view make Jesus Christ the core and center of the revelation; and while they allow for the instances in which Christ adopted the language of his contemporaries in order to instruct or refute them on the basis of their own assumptions, they hold him free from all error in his revelation to men of the mind and will of God. The inductive view holding, as it does, the higher view of the person of Christ, finds no difficulty in accepting the Old Testament revelation, since it was all preparatory to, and derives its chief significance from, its relations to Jesus. It also accepts the inspiration of the New Testament books other than the synoptic Gospels, since it comports with its general view of Christ that he should

<sup>12</sup> James Orr, "Revelation and Inspiration," pp. 215, 216.

have given the promise of future guidance recorded in John 16: 13, 14, and fulfilled the promise in the subsequent history.

It appears from the foregoing very condensed account of the two views, the traditional and the inductive, that they both stand for the authoritative-ness of the Scriptures. As Professor Ramsay says in his closing chapter, his own view involves an inspiration quite as real and quite as fundamental as the traditional view. The differences between the two views refer to matters of detail, to the way in which God employs the human factors in revelation, and to similar points which do not touch the fundamental issue. One is rather rigid and mechanical in its view of how the Bible came into existence; the other regards it as a living thing, like an organism, full of life and power, instinct with the life of God in human experience. Between the two views there is no difference as to the reality of the supernatural revelation; as to its sufficiency for our religious needs; and as to the finality and authoritativeness of the Bible.

Now a great deal has been gained when we reach this point. For it shows clearly that the doctrine of the authority of Scripture is not at all bound up with the abstract theories and elaborate philosophic attempts to explain inspiration. Logic never did and never will succeed fully in expressing all the meaning of God's action in and upon the men who wrote the Bible. Men may vary as they will in

these attempts, the main point has to do with the question, What function is assigned to the Bible in the religious life; is it authoritative or is it not? The simplest and most direct method for reaching a conclusion is the inductive, which takes into account all the facts of Scripture and all the facts of experience.<sup>18</sup>

We consider briefly in the next place the compromise view. We have previously shown the inconsistency and untenableness of Sabatier's attempt to combine the subjective criterion of truth with any sort of authority in the Scriptures. The subjective principle goes with the radical view on authority. It is impossible to make the Christian consciousness final and then in turn subject it to the Scriptures. The true method leaves an authoritative Scripture which Christian experience does not and cannot transcend. It assigns to the Scriptures a function which enables them to connect the soul with the sources of divine life and thus leads to the experience. The experience in turn confirms the truth of the Scriptures. The Christian consciousness, in other words, does not first determine what is true in religion and then go to the Bible and cull from it those parts which harmonize with the individual consciousness as authoritative and reject the

<sup>18</sup> Among recent works which present the inductive view, the following may be cited: James Orr, "Revelation and Inspiration"; W. Sanday, "Inspiration"; Marcus Dods, "The Bible; its Origin and Nature." These writers do not hold identical views at all points, but they all agree in fundamental points of view and in the general method of arriving at the result.

rest. On the contrary, the Bible sets forth a form of religious experience which meets the total religious needs of man, and is used of God in reproducing that experience in the world through the church and the operation of the Holy Spirit in teaching and preaching.

Here, however, we wish to consider briefly another form of the compromise view, viz., that which accepts Jesus Christ as transcendent, as God manifest in the flesh, as Redeemer and Lord of men. But after accepting thus the transcendent Christ, it claims that the authority of the Bible is limited to what it gives us directly from Christ, or what is in harmony with this, and then proceeds to decompose it into a Christian and non-Christian part. In one very attractive writer the view is expressed quite clearly as follows: The Bible is authoritative, but it is not equally authoritative in all its parts. The core of it is Christ's teachings about God as Father. All other teaching in Scripture which is of permanent validity agrees with this central truth. Some of Paul's teachings must be rejected, especially those which represent Christ's work of atonement in legal or Jewish altar forms, as a propitiation offered to God and required by God. There is a Christian element in the Bible which must be found and accepted, the rest is not permanently binding. Even in the words of Christ about future things we must discriminate between the Christian and non-Christian elements.

The view we are outlining is that of the late Prof. W. N. Clarke, as set forth in his volume entitled "The Use of the Scriptures in Theology." Interesting as is Doctor Clarke's discussion, much of it appears to be irrelevant to his main point. For example, it is urged that in the use of Scriptures we must reject all anthropomorphic conceptions of God; the idea of localized worship;<sup>14</sup> questions as to circumcision; the idea of salvation by works,<sup>15</sup> and other related things. Now these points are really without pertinency to Doctor Clarke's argument. We do not of course hold to any of the conceptions enumerated. Yet, on the other hand, we do accept all of them in the senses and for the uses originally intended. Surely all will admit that anthropomorphic conceptions of God did have a value at certain stages of religious development. Our nurseries should make this plain. Circumcision and localized worship had their uses, which were quite legitimate, and Paul presents a view as to the relation of works to salvation in the Old Testament, which shows that God employed the idea for pedagogic purposes of very high value. The Bible itself in its later revelations cancels those earlier and lower stages. It is rather a mechanical view of Scripture which treats it as a dead level everywhere instead of a gradual ascent, and then takes credit to the Christian consciousness for rejecting the earlier and

<sup>14</sup> Pp. 92-95.

<sup>15</sup> "The Use of the Scriptures in Theology," pp. 96-98.



lower for the later and higher truths. The Christian consciousness indeed accepts the higher, but it is left no option in the matter so long as it accepts the total message of Scripture on the points in question. When the New Testament abolishes circumcision, it is not to be inferred that the Old Testament view of circumcision was false and that it was left to us to pick out the true and leave the false. Circumcision had its use and function in the Old Testament revelation, and what we do is to recognize its validity and use there, while passing to the higher New Testament standpoint.

Let it be understood that we are not here arguing against the need of discrimination and spiritual insight in the interpretation of the Bible; nor in favor of the view that the Bible is an automatically self-interpreting book in the use of which no one can possibly go astray. Christian history abounds in proofs to the contrary. Certainly we are not assuming that there is any conflict between the true Christian consciousness and the true gospel message. Our immediate point is to make clear the fact that we are not justified in ascribing to the Christian consciousness in the use of the Scriptures a task which the Scriptures themselves have already performed. We must indeed discern the final truths of a progressive revelation and accept them in their finality as distinguished from the earlier stages. But this is simply a matter of interpretation, not the finding of a false and a true so intermingled that we

are in hopeless darkness until an inward principle leads us out.

But Doctor Clarke insists that we have not only a pre-Christian, but a non-Christian element in the New Testament—in the writings of Paul and even in the eschatological teachings of Jesus himself. Here he is not referring to matters of detail which are often urged, such as Paul's use of rabbinic methods of argumentation and the like. He refers to that which is organic in Paul's thought and fundamental to his message regarding Christ and the gospel. Here we cannot agree with Doctor Clarke. Space forbids comment on Doctor Clarke's statements as to the eschatological teaching of Jesus. But we must note briefly the non-Christian element alleged by him in Paul's writings.

Doctor Clarke has much to say against the idea of propitiation and the altar form of the doctrine of salvation, found especially in the writings of Paul.<sup>16</sup> Everything legal in character he thinks is out of place in the true doctrine of man's relations to God. Now it is a curious contradiction of Doctor Clarke's view that Paul defined his doctrine of the law and its function directly in antithesis to the Jewish or merely legalistic standpoint. Formally and consciously Paul outlines the Christian experience as to Christ's redemptive work against the Jewish manner of regarding salvation, and yet he retains the idea of propitiation and in some real sense he

<sup>16</sup> Pp. 100f.

retains the idea of satisfaction to the requirements of the divine law. Luther's tremendous protest against a false legalism was the assertion of the vital principle of justification by faith based on propitiation. The truth is that the legal is a genuine element in human experience of redemption, an element in the process itself, an element indeed in the constitution of the world. The legal does not contradict the filial; it is rather an element in it. The personal universe in which we realize sonship to God is not devoid of a constitution because it is personal and vital. The filial is higher than the legal, as the apex is higher than the base of the pyramid. But the apex needs the base nevertheless. The insistence upon the filial as exclusive of the legal overlooks the nature of the experience of sin and guilt. Sin is a descent to the legal plane of experience as opposed to the filial, indeed, and the legal consciousness carries in it the sense of guilt.

But to wipe out the legal aspect of experience, that is, the real significance of the sin and guilt consciousness, is to cheapen the filial. Redemption is significant both in respect to what it delivers us from and also in respect to its positive contents. It is no gain to theology to treat that which is last and highest as if that which is first and lowest had no existence at all. The sphere in which the sinner moves is a morally constituted sphere as truly as that in which a son of God moves. Sin and grace are correlatives, and it is wholly illusory to

imagine that we enhance the value or meaning of the one when we endeavor to empty the other of significance. The choice of sonship by us is presented in the New Testament as of the highest value in God's sight. This is because it is correlative to the deliberate choice of sin. These two choices are the foci on the human side where the deepest significance of the redemptive process appears. The choice of sin is the expression of mere creaturehood as distinguished from sonship. Yet sons retain their creaturehood. Creaturehood rests on the legal, since, on the one hand, it cannot escape the universe of God and, on the other, it cannot as such rise to sonship. There is then a genetic relationship between the legal and filial aspects of experience. Each sheds light on the other, each interprets the other. Certainly Paul's gospel shows this; the Reformation theology shows it; the hymnology of Christian history illustrates it, and Christian experience to-day confirms it. There are millions of Christians whose experience of the grace of God in Christ would be emptied of half its meaning if this side of it were destroyed. Paul's account of the death of Christ is the form of teaching which is the ground and warrant of that experience.

Our conclusion, therefore, is not that Doctor Clarke's assumption of an agreement between the true Christian experience and the New Testament message is false. In this he is correct. The error of his view is in assuming that a particular type

of experience is exhaustive and exclusive of all others and contradictory to them—in particular that the final and highest cancels the earlier stages of experience, and that the earlier may not be gathered up in the later. Nor do we combat his general assumption that the Bible must not be regarded as a book filled with teachings which awaken no response in us, which are incongruous with our religious cravings, and must be accepted on sheer authority. He is quite right in repudiating such a view. But we hold against his view that valid Christian experience is broader and richer than he makes it; the response of the religious consciousness of man to God's revelation in Christ includes elements which Doctor Clarke omits altogether from his view of the gospel.

Doctor Clarke recognizes a real objective authority in the Bible.<sup>17</sup> Along with this he accepts the fulness and finality of God's revelation in Christ. He accepts the transcendent Christ and refuses to class him with other men. Now it seems clear to the present writer that Doctor Clarke's views are inconsistent if not self-contradictory at one vital point. If his view of the larger and higher Christ is correct, he should hold a different view of the authoritativeness and inspiration of the New Testament as a whole. If his subjective criterion of truth is the sound and correct one, then he will with difficulty maintain his faith in the transcendent Christ.

<sup>17</sup> "Use of Scriptures in Theology," p. 76f.

Harnack and Bousset and scores of others apply the subjective criterion and find another kind of Christ in the Gospels. The "Christian element" which they find strikes at the roots of the Christian element which Doctor Clarke finds with regard to the vital point as to who and what Jesus was. The Christian element which Luther found and which shook the civilized world to its foundations strikes at the roots of the Christian element which Doctor Clarke finds at another vital point.

The majority of modern evangelical Christians, if they should rest in a subjective criterion, would inevitably insist on those elements in Paul's teachings rejected by Doctor Clarke, since they are elements vital to their own experience. Each and all of these opponents of Doctor Clarke are as vehement and enthusiastic in the certainty of their "Christian element" as is Doctor Clarke in his. In fact, when we apply the criterion of experience to Scripture as a whole we must take experience as a whole. We must make of experience a synthetic principle, not an individualistic one. The failure to do this is the underlying fallacy of most of those who agree with Doctor Clarke's type of opinion on this point.

Now, so soon as we apply Christian experience in this synthetic way, as inclusive of all the varying phases of that experience, we obtain a principle which harmonizes with the larger conception of Christ and of inspiration. If Jesus was miraculous, transcendent, divine, we can easily accept the report

of John, as previously cited, in which he promises the future guidance of the Holy Spirit to disciples in their efforts to understand and teach concerning him and his Gospel. A full and final gospel can scarcely be found in and through Christ on any other view. If he was what Bousset claims, a man like other men simply, then he was just one among the many seekers after God. His disciples understood him as best they could. But we test the truth of his teaching, and therewith of their report, by another criterion altogether. The measure of authoritativeness in the final result will depend upon the degree in which we discover that there were elements of real truth in his teachings. But this in no sense implies necessarily that he brought us the final truth about God. Doctor Clarke's subjective criterion for discovering the Christian element in the New Testament, consistently applied, would class him with Bousset and Harnack. But his view of the person of Christ logically classes him with Sanday, Dods, and Orr. To hold the view of a transcendent Christ, a final revelation and redemption, and along with these to assume a radically erroneous New Testament written by those nearest to him, and then the secure recovery of this transcendent and divine Christ in an age of scientific unbelief in spite of the radically erroneous record, is, to say the least, an inconsistent juxtaposition of assumptions and beliefs. We assert then that the subjective criterion goes with the radical view as

to Christ, and that the compromise conception of the inspiration and authority of the New Testament fails in consistency and convincing power. Doctor Clarke, always charming as a writer and spiritual in his appeal, seems clearly to come short in his view of the true Christian experience, and therewith he fails in his conclusion as to the authority of Scripture.

#### 7. CONCLUSION AS TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

We have made the statement in the preceding pages that the Bible is the "final authority in religion." We have also asserted that Christ, as Revealer of God and Redeemer of men, is the seat of authority in religion and absolutely final for human needs. It remains to reconcile the two statements. The Scriptures do not and cannot take the place of Jesus Christ. We are not saved by belief in the Scriptures, but by a living faith in Christ. To understand what is meant by the phrase the "authority of the Bible" we need only to remember that in so expressing ourselves we are not speaking *in vacuo*, and apart from any sense of the function of a literature as distinct from that of a personal object in religion. The authority of Scripture is that simply of an inspired literature which interprets a life. Our previously expounded distinction between the life and the literature which explains it and introduces to it should have made



the point clear. F. D. Maurice, in his work entitled "The Kingdom of God," distinguishes between "a gospel of notions and a gospel of facts." Now the Christian life belongs to the fact side of the gospel; the Bible lies on the notion (i. e., idea, truth) side. Or to employ a kindred distinction: The gospel may be regarded as ideas or as power. The Bible is authoritative for the determinative ideas, but Christ is determinative for power. Or once more we may say the gospel may be regarded as revelation or as union with the personal object in religion. The Bible is the revelation; the life is union with Christ. Again, the gospel may be described as the operation of spiritual forces in a moral kingdom of persons, or the description of the forces of that kingdom. The life involves the forces, the Bible is the description thereof. In short, Christ as the Revealer of God and Redeemer of men is the seat of authority in religion and above and underneath and before the Bible. But the Bible is the authoritative literature which leads us to Christ. As such the Bible is not something interposed between God and the soul. It is rather the thoughts and truths and description of the life-adjustments required to give us the vision of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Just as the principle of freedom and that of authority, as we have seen, meet and are reconciled in Christ, so also do they come together and mutually fulfil each other in the Bible. The

authority of the Scriptures is precisely analogous in this respect to that of Jesus. The authority of Scriptures possesses none of the marks of illegitimate authorities in religion. The Bible is not a statute book in the legalistic sense. If so, it would necessarily be boundless in its details, an infinite code in fact, to meet all the varying conditions of human life. The Bible came not by legislation, but by revelation. It is not even a book of rules, but rather of principles, infinitely expansive and adaptable. It is not a book of general decrees to be enforced in their details by an authoritative priesthood. This would be Roman Catholicism. The Bible is not a book of ritual, which, if made the chief thing in religion would leave it empty of vitality and power. The Bible might be any or all of these things and fail to produce the essential religious quality, vital union with God. Its finality as an authority in religion is due not to the presence, but to the absence of these things in its teachings.

We search in vain in the teachings of the New Testament for any forms of interference with human freedom. The individual, the family, the church, the civilization, are left intact. The play of individualism in the moral, social, intellectual, and religious life of man is left to work itself out from within. Endless variety has resulted in the lives of individuals and the development of society, wherever the New Testament ideal has prevailed.

In the constitution of the church itself the New Testament gives no inkling of any authority which arms one set of ecclesiastical officials with power over others. Freedom and autonomy are the law at the basis of the organization of the Church. The State has no authority over the conscience, and all men are equal in the right of direct approach to God. In other words, God's method in bringing men to himself is the method of freedom, a method necessarily slow. The bruised reed he will not break and the dimly burning flax he will not quench. The true and final authority can only be one which is expansive and elastic enough to widen with the growth of man and yet remain close and vital enough to meet his needs at each step along the way. The choicest element in man's development and training, viz., his free choice of right, and free imitation of God, would be destroyed by a statutory form of religion.

Now the question presents itself: If the Bible is not a statute book merely, nor a rule book merely, nor a decree book merely, and if it leaves the individual and the family and the Church and the State entirely free, how comes it to possess finality as authority in religion? The reply is that its finality as authority is due to its unique power of showing the way without compelling man; or rather its capacity for revealing destiny and then of constraining man to it; or yet again, its disclosure of the inner constitution of the moral and spiritual

universe, while leaving man free to conform to it. It is not statute or rule or decree; it is a moral and spiritual constitution. The Bible is the revelation of the constitution of the personal kingdom which includes God and man. Just as the attainment of power and the realization of human destiny in relation to the physical universe keeps pace with man's progressive knowledge of its constitution through the researches of science, so also man's moral and religious destiny is realized as his life progressively conforms to the constitution of the personal kingdom of free spirits. In this kingdom religion is the fundamental fact; and revelation is the completion of the religious relationship, since it is God responding to man, or God seeking man. Without revelation religion would remain one-sided and incomplete. Christianity is the response of God to man's quest for God, and it is thus the fulfilment of all other forms of religious yearning and desire. The truths of Scripture, since they come through the free interaction of man's spirit with God in the struggles and experiences of life, possess the authority of all truth which man discovers for himself; and since they are due also to God's activity in revealing himself to man they possess a unique authority above other forms of truth. As these truths of Scripture reveal the constitution of the moral and personal universe, they bring God and man together, and are thus unlike all fictitious and illegitimate authorities which separate

God and man. The truths of Scripture are like a circle which encompasses all personal beings, including God and man. They define the boundaries and give the clue to the free interaction of God and man. The true doctrine of an authoritative revelation needs only the assumption that we have in the Bible such a moral constitution as we have described. This leaves it not only the final authority in religion, but the only clue to man's freedom and future culture, both intellectual and religious.

## CHAPTER XI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We may now very briefly sum up our general conclusions. There are certainly two spheres of human knowledge, the scientific and the religious. We have knowledge of the mechanical universe of law and energy. Here science has achieved her greatest triumphs. We also have knowledge in the supra-mechanical and supra-scientific realm of personal relationships, and in particular in the religious realm of divine and human fellowships.

The term science, then, will either expand in meaning so as to include more than one criterion of truth, or else it will cease to be a word of catholic import inclusive of all knowledge, and become instead a technical term of narrower meaning like chemistry or geology and descriptive merely of a single form of knowledge. The religious life of man contains elements of real knowledge. In it man deals with an objective world of truth and reality just as in physical science. As such it is autonomous and free and in no sense subject to the jurisdiction of other forms of human culture with principles of explanation alien to the religious life.

There have been in human history two tyrannies

growing out of the abuse of two forms of freedom which will cease when the totality of man's experience is thus recognized. The two forms of freedom are the scientific and the religious, and the two forms of tyranny are the tyranny of science and that of religion. Science is the foe to freedom when it seeks to forestall man's intercourse with the spiritual universe; and religion is the foe to freedom when it seeks to trammel science in the study of nature. Human culture then must be as broad as human life. All legitimate forms of culture are forms of freedom. God's method with the race is the method of freedom, since this method alone is compatible with man's highest development.

Since God's method with man is the method of freedom, all the particulars of his providential and paternal dealings must conform ultimately to the ideal of freedom. But his method will vary in detail in accordance with the form of human development he seeks to promote. Religion, for example, calls for self-revelation on God's part, first, because only thus is the religious relationship completed, a relationship calling for reciprocal activity as between God and man; and secondly, because self-revelation or self-projection of God into man's life in the form of truth is the only method of freedom in the religious life. It alone evokes a full and free response of man to God. But here truth is more than the self-disclosure of God to the cognitive faculty in man. To regard it as cog-

nitive merely in this sphere is to confound religion with a single form of scientific knowledge. The essence of religion being redemption, religious truth becomes identical with the redeeming activity of God. The freedom of man in his response to God, the integrity of the judicial process within him, appears in the Amen of his whole nature, intellect, emotions, and will, to this redemptive activity of God. The philosophy of religion must find its starting-point in the data supplied by the vital experiences of the religious life itself, just as other forms of philosophy must build on the results achieved by the science of nature. Without this basis of vital experience the philosophy of religion can never become more than an abstraction. It can never grip men powerfully since it never advances beyond the unstable equilibrium of all purely rationalistic systems.

Now since God's method is that of freedom and his instrument truth, the rise of authority in religion is inevitable. Through the operation of fundamental psychological and social laws, truth achieved by man, or derived otherwise, becomes objectified in forms which guide him in his upward course. This indeed is the sole condition and warrant of progress. This objective and authoritative truth is our sole means of relating or adjusting ourselves to the universe, physical and spiritual, as we progressively discover its meaning through interaction with it. Otherwise we remain infants, or blind and



dumb creatures floundering aimlessly in a quagmire. Since subjectivism postpones indefinitely the discovery of truth or cancels its meaning entirely, it arrests thought and progress and breaks down as the sole criterion of religious truth. Authoritative truth is the response which the universe yields to man's search, and freedom is the response which man yields to that self-disclosure of the universe, physical and spiritual. Freedom and authority are thus correlative terms, neither of which in and of itself is adequate to set forth the meaning of man's life in relation to his cosmic and spiritual environment.

Fundamentally the religious relationship is personal on both sides. Religious authority, therefore, is the authority of the religious object, the personal God. The authority of truth, however, is a quite legitimate conception, since truth is significant only in relation to its personal ground and source. But since it is the personal object in religion and our adjustment to that object which is vital and fundamental, we must be on guard against misconceiving authoritative religious truths as statutory or ecclesiastical or mandatory merely, as distinguished from revelation. No creedal or ecclesiastical forms of religious authority are legitimate which thwart the vital interaction of man and God. The function of authoritative religious truth is to lead men to God. This is precisely the use of the Bible. Being the literary expression of living experience in the

religious life, the spontaneous and free output of that experience under the guidance of God's Spirit, it is precisely adapted to reproduce that experience in men to-day. Science discloses the constitution of an indifferent cosmos. The Scriptures reveal the constitution of a spiritual universe in which a loving God seeks man and in which the yearning heart of man finds God.

It is this seeking and finding which is the characteristic law of the spiritual universe in which man moves and with which he interacts. The seeking God disclosed himself finally and fully in the redeeming Christ. Man's thought expanded to the breaking-point in his philosophic efforts to grasp the infinite and human personality collapsed in one or another form of pantheism. In Christ the process was reversed and the Infinite disclosed himself as like unto those who so vainly sought him, yet as unspeakably more than man had dreamed. In Christ the beatific vision was first realized for man since he focalized the eternal in his personal human life. His authority is not one which crushes or compels, but one which yearns and waits. Out of the dim and distant into the near world he came. 'As weary men have turned their faces toward him, they have found in him the answer to all their questionings. He does not strive nor cry aloud. The process by which he draws men must be moral and spiritual, not physical or political. His authority is the authority of moral and spiritual preeminence.

The nations of the world, even the most backward, are feeling the tug of his moral energy in the sub-conscious region of their minds. He shall not faint nor be discouraged till he has set judgment in the earth.

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